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ABSTRACT

This report summarizes a longitudinal study of 32,245 students enrolled for credit and new to 32 California community colleges during the fall quarter of 1972. Patterns of enrollment for six semesters are analyzed by a number of criteria: age at the time of community college entrance, sex, part-time versus full-time status, and freshman versus transfer admission. At the end of six semesters, 32 percent of the sample had persisted two or more continuous semesters, 6 percent were still enrolled, 8 percent had graduated, 19 percent had enrolled for more than one term but did not persist in continuous attendance, and 35 percent had enrolled for only the first term during the 3-year period studied. A followup study of a sample of the students who had been enrolled for only one term is reported, and the cumulative records of grades earned by students are analyzed. A section of findings about the extent to which the California community college system is fulfilling its purposes and achieving its objectives is included, and a number of recommendations concerning community college function, student accounting, grading, reporting and analysis of student data, faculty development, and policy-making are made. Data are organized into 19 tables, and a list of participating institutions is appended. (NHM)

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THROUGH THE OPEN DOOR

A Study of Patterns of Enrollment and Performance in California's Community Colleges

A Report

Prepared by the Staff

of the

CALIFORNIA POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION COMMISSION

JC 760 144

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PREFACE

The model Community College student of the 1960's came from a lower middle class family with no history of college attendance, earned high school grades which did not qualify him for University freshman admission, enrolled in the local Community College without clear-cut goals, and, with the help of good teachers and counselors, was able to transfer with junior standing to the University and earned good grades ever after. College files are replete with records of such students who helped their Community Colleges achieve the academic respectability which they enjoy today.

There are no fewer such students today than in prior years, but their ranks have been swelled by new student clienteles to whom the Community College offers the only feasible opportunity for continuing postsecondary education. The first were the doubly disadvantaged young people with both economic and culturally related handicaps. More recently, the focus has been on the unemployed needing a second set of job skills, women reentering education after their children are grown, the physically handicapped, and now the more traditionally educated residents of the community who take advantage of lifetime learning opportunities in their local Community Colleges.

Among the hundreds of thousands of success stories which could be told, the following exemplifies very well the new student body of the Community Colleges of the 1970's. Mr. R has earned more than 145 semester units of credit, including an associate degree, at one Community College and is still enrolled. Born on Corregidor in 1926, he was recruited into the U.S. Army when war broke out in 1941. He was trained and served as part of an underground demolition team. He retired from the Army in California in 1962, still with less than a high school education, an English language handicap, and no usable skills for civilian employment.

While working as a janitor, he enrolled at the Community College. He took a computer course, then electronic courses because that was the field in which he wanted employment; then English, so that his instructors could understand what he said; then psychology, so that he might understand the behavior of others. After receiving his degree, he continued with courses in sociology, anthropology ("to find out where I came from!"), and then aviation. His associate degree and his employment are in the field of electronics. He has now risen to the federal civil service GS-12 level, and has taken courses to enable him to help others seeking an education. He now takes courses to prepare for a second retirement.

This is the story of the California Community Colleges in the 1970s, a "people" story which sometimes becomes obscured by the statistics in the research report which follows. But statistics are necessary too, as benchmarks against which changes can be measured in the future. The report provides the first such benchmarks for the Community Colleges as a basis for assessing current policies and practices. Appreciation is expressed to the staffs and students of the colleges which have cooperated so splendidly in this long-term endeavor.

Donald R. McNeil
Director

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Findings about the extent to which the California Community College system is fulfilling its purposes and achieving its objectives:

Community College enrollments continue to grow at a rate exceeding projections, in part as a result of the development of programs and services for new student clienteles. These include the educationally and economically disadvantaged, the physically handicapped, women reentering postsecondary education, senior citizens, workers needing training for relicensing, and high school students who can profit from college courses. Between 1969-74 growth of enrollment of part-time students in credit courses was three times greater than that found for full-time students with total enrollments in both credit and non-credit courses growing 57 percent during the five-year period.

The enrollment increases have brought about fundamental changes in the composition of the student body of the Community Colleges, with a concomitant change in the emphasis placed on the various functions performed by the colleges. Part-time students now comprise two-thirds of the headcount enrollment. Students at least 21 years of age who are enrolled part time account for nearly half the students in credit courses.

The part-time, older students come with their own objectives relating to educational, career, and personal growth which often are achieved outside degree and certificate programs. They tend to enroll on an intermittent basis, that is, skipping semesters and enrolling in other institutions offering postsecondary programs. Although enrolled in courses offered for credit, they sometimes forego credits and grades on the grounds that they have no need for certification. Many already hold baccalaureate and advanced degrees but find courses in their local Community Colleges which satisfy a wide range of individual interests. The definition of Community Colleges as two-year institutions offering lower division courses and programs is no deterrent to the countless adults who seek opportunity for continuing education and cannot leave their home communities to enroll in four-year institutions, or cannot afford to pay tuition and fees charged by other types of institutions. *Thus, continuing education for part-time, adult students has become the dominant function of the Community Colleges, with no resultant neglect of the occupational, transfer, and general education functions for more traditional students.*

Recommendation:

Community Colleges should be recognized as "less than baccalaureate" institutions of postsecondary education in the Education Code and elsewhere, with statements of function refined so as to give proper emphasis to the mission of serving community needs and providing opportunities for continuing education for local residents.

This redefinition of function should not be construed as authorization for offering upper division courses and programs.

Findings about student accounting:

Definitions of students and procedures for counting them do not reflect adequately the complex nature of the new student clienteles and the idiosyncratic nature of their objectives. Students must enroll for credit in credit courses and are expected to attend through the entire semester or quarter, irrespective of their objectives, initial competencies, and/or rates of learning.

Community College students are now earning an average of 64 units of credit per 100 units for which they are enrolled in the first census week. Those who enroll only once or intermittently complete an average of 37 units of credit per 100 of enrollment, compared with an average of more than 80 earned by students exhibiting more traditional patterns of enrollment. A number of reasons for low rates of course completion for credit have been found in the various analyses of student behavior:

1. Students may not have perceived themselves to be enrolled for credit since they had no need (or desire) for credits and grades. Their records showed W, NCR, and/or F for noncompletion of courses in which they did not expect to earn credit.

2. Students may have achieved their own (and often the course) objectives before the end of the semester but had no way to demonstrate their achievement if they did not take final examinations and/or attend to the end of the course. Their records also showed W, NCR, and/or F as final grades.

3. Students may have registered for courses but were not actually enrolled at the census week in some or all of the courses shown on their records. In some cases, preregistration that took place before the beginning of the term was not canceled.

4. Students may have been unable to achieve course objectives at a satisfactory level by the end of the semester or quarter, with the result that they requested that the final grade be recorded as W or NCR, rather than risk a poor or failing grade.

5. Students may have been taking Community College courses while matriculated at other types of post-secondary institutions, either concurrently or on an intermittent basis. Conflicts in scheduling, for example, semester versus quarter calendars, sometimes made it impossible for such students to complete their Community College courses.

It should be noted that the Community Colleges are beginning to move in directions consonant with the recommendations in this report, by instituting a second census week for checking student enrollments and by planning a pilot project in six districts which will permit experimentation with flexible scheduling and variable course credit.

Changes in patterns of enrollment resulting from increases in nontraditional students in the Community Colleges have produced still another problem of student accounting which has implications for projecting enrollments. The analysis of student records has shown that some students reported as new to a particular college had in fact been enrolled for one or more previous semesters or quarters. Their classification as "new students" was apparently made on the grounds that they had earned no credit, although they had been enrolled for credit at the census week and permanent records had been made for them showing the courses in which they were enrolled. The practice appears to vary among the colleges in the study.

Recommendations:

1. Students should be required to affirm their active enrollment in each course during the census week(s), indicating that they are actively enrolled for credit or no credit, and intend to complete the course.

2. Students who are not enrolled for credit in a course offered for credit should be designated in some manner other than "NC" or "NCR" (for no credit). These symbols should be used exclusively as an end-of-course grade indicating unsatisfactory or noncompletion. Furthermore, the use of "W" should be standardized among the colleges so as to avoid confusion with NC and NCR grades. Students not enrolled for credit should be counted separately at the census and a special designation should be adopted for use on their records.

3. Community Colleges should take advantage of that section of the Code which authorizes them to grant credit for courses which are completed before the end of the semester or quarter. Students withdrawing from courses should be encouraged to take "challenge" examinations for full or partial credit. Consideration should be given to making provision for students to exit from courses at mid-semester and to petition for full or partial credit, based on completion of course objectives.

4. Students who are unable to complete a course satisfactorily within the full semester should have an opportunity to continue to completion with an interim grade of "Incomplete," without repeating the course. A time limit should be set for such completion, by the end of which a permanent grade must be awarded.

5. The definition of "new" student which is used in State and federal reporting should be clarified with respect to students who were enrolled during one or more prior terms without earning any credit. It is recommended that such students be excluded from the definition of "new" students if their prior enrollment was during a regular term.

Findings about grades and the reporting of grades:

Like other postsecondary institutions, Community Colleges have adopted significant reforms in grading during the past several years which have resulted in a reduction in the number of penalty grades awarded (F and WF). At the same time, Community

Colleges have exercised the autonomy given them by the Board of Governors with respect to developing local grading policies and practices within minimum guidelines contained in Title 5 of the Administrative Code. Both grading and conditions for academic probation and dismissal are subject to local options. As a result, some grade symbols--particularly W, NC, NCR, and F--have different meanings as recorded on student records by different Community Colleges. Problems arise from a lack of clarity concerning the conditions under which various symbols are used, and also from observed differences between policies published in college catalogs and practices in posting grades on student records.

There has been no finding that certain grading policies/practices are "good" and others "bad," nor has there been any conclusion that differences among the colleges are undesirable in this area of local autonomy. However, the observed differences in practices have brought about two problems relating to fairness to students who are subject to them. The first is a problem of interpretation by employers and others who may be evaluating students on the basis of transcripts from colleges which differ with respect to the use and meaning of various grade symbols. The second problem is one of fairness to students with respect to opportunities to enter specialized programs where there is competition for student spaces, to transfer to a baccalaureate institution, and in some cases to remain in college in good standing and to meet graduation requirements. Differences among the colleges in the use of penalty grades (F and WF), the imposition of probation and dismissal, and the recording of penalty grades and actions on student records appear to have resulted in unequal opportunities being afforded students in different colleges which have a common mission to provide opportunities for students to pursue postsecondary programs.

Analysis of catalog statements and transcripts of student records has also shown that two types of students do not appear to be subject to probationary and dismissal action for unsatisfactory performance at some colleges in the study. Part-time students--already a majority in the Community College population--constitute one group to which standards for probation and dismissal do not apply on some campuses.

The second group involves students who earn few or no letter grades, that is, whose grades are predominantly CR, NCR, and W. Standards for probation and dismissal have traditionally been based on letter grades (A, B, C, D, and F) and grade-point averages computed from them. With the disappearance of

grades of D and F from most transcripts, few students are put on probation under the old standards.

Finally, there is widespread agreement among Community College administrators and staff that grades are often an inappropriate indicator of quality of performance, particularly on the part of new student clienteles. At the same time, no alternatives to grades and grade-point averages have been developed which could be put to use at this time, particularly for nontraditional students. An approach which appears to offer promise would involve evaluating students in terms of their own educational, career, and/or personal objectives, taking into account the students' need to change their objectives on the basis of experience. Neither staff nor techniques for measurement are available at this time which would make it possible to use this approach to evaluating student performance.

Recommendations:

1. Community Colleges should develop and implement guidelines for the contents of permanent student records, including what grades are shown, how course repetitions are treated, whether probation and dismissal actions are to be shown, how transfer credits and grades are recorded, and similar matters. In formulating the guidelines, recommendations from the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers should be taken into account.

2. Community Colleges as a segment of postsecondary education should examine their current grading practices with respect to the awarding of penalty grades, to insure that opportunities to persist toward the degree, to transfer to baccalaureate institutions, and, in some instances, to enter the program of their choice do not differ for students attending colleges whose practices differ in the awarding of such grades.

3. Community Colleges should adopt and implement standards for probation and dismissal for students who do not receive letter grades, as required by the Administrative Code, Title 5. Standards should also be adopted for part-time students, and for systems involving both letter

grades (A, B, C, D, and F) and non-penalty grades (CR, NCR, and W).

4. Community Colleges should develop techniques for identifying and then providing additional counseling and other help to students whose record of poor performance extends over a period of several semesters. Approval to continue at the college should be contingent upon enrollment in courses and programs which such students have a reasonable probability of completing with satisfactory grades.

5. Community Colleges should be encouraged to work toward a contract system involving students and their advisors, in which provision would be made for individualized objectives and educational plans for achieving them.

6. Community Colleges should propose new criteria for evaluating student performance, to be used in place of grades, grade-point averages, transfer action, and the awarding of degrees and certificates when traditional criteria are not appropriate. Consideration should be given to the use of continuing education units for students not enrolled for credit. Such proposals should include techniques for measurement, as well as criteria.

Other findings and recommendations:

Efforts to find out from the Community Colleges about the volume and nature of transfer to the University of California and the State University and Colleges were quite unsuccessful. In the State University and Colleges system, annual reports to the Community Colleges about their transfer students are a responsibility of individual campuses at this time, with considerable variation in the nature of the reports which have been made. The University of California appears to make reports of transfer students on a more regular basis, but many Community Colleges were unable to provide information from such reports for use in the study.

At the same time, it has become clear that the volume of intersegmental transfer of all types is quite large and probably growing; for example, from four-year to Community

Colleges and between four-year institutions. Furthermore, transfer from Community Colleges to independent colleges and universities is likely to increase as additional student aid becomes available.

Recommendation:

> A renewed effort should be made to improve reporting and analysis of data for Community College students who transfer to baccalaureate institutions, including information about their choice of campus, units transferred, grades earned during the first semester, and other data which are computerized. Community Colleges should also be encouraged to develop reporting procedures for students transferring into their institutions which would include information about the volume and success of such students.

Faculty and staff in the Community Colleges have for the most part been educated in fairly traditional ways: for example, in master's degree programs in their discipline in the State University and Colleges, in credential programs for secondary school teachers, or, in the case of some instructors in occupational fields, while employed in the area of competency in which they teach, supplemented by a short-term, special preparation program. Change in the nature of the faculty and staff has been considerably less than that found in the student body during the past several years, in terms of the latter's objectives, life experiences, motivation, and other characteristics related to their enrollment. Staff development programs are important in helping faculty and staff adjust to the successive new student clienteles which are enrolling in the Community Colleges.

Recommendation:

> Community Colleges should be encouraged to strengthen their efforts to involve both new and tenured faculty and staff in in-service staff development programs, to enable them to cope more effectively with changing student characteristics and objectives, new approaches to grading and certification, and the need to adapt traditional teaching methods to new kinds of students.

The findings of the study tend to affirm the wisdom of State policy giving as much autonomy to the Community Colleges as is possible. The communities which the colleges serve differ

widely with respect to their present and potential student clienteles, availability of other opportunity for post-secondary education, and feelings about what their local college ought to be and do. State laws and regulations provide guidelines for local action; regional accreditation provides checks on the reasonableness and efficacy of locally developed programs and policies. Still, since the California Community Colleges have been entrusted by the State to provide post-secondary education opportunity for the vast majority of the citizens who seek it in publicly supported institutions, there appears to be a need to insure that individuals are not unduly disadvantaged with respect to opportunities for continuing education as a result of residing in a particular Community College district.

Recommendation:

In order to insure that equality of opportunity is not compromised by local actions, the Community Colleges, with the assistance of the Postsecondary Education Commission and the Board of Governors, should develop and implement procedures for monitoring the effects on students of educational policies and practices adopted by local boards of trustees in areas in which they have been given autonomy by the Board of Governors.

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Study of Patterns of Enrollment and Performance
in California's Community Colleges
1975-76

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I. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND FOR THE STUDY

The California Community Colleges in Perspective

The Master Plan for Higher Education in California: 1960-1975 recommended that Community College functions be the offering of

> ... instruction through but not beyond the fourteenth grade level including, but not limited to (a) standard collegiate courses for transfer to higher institutions, (b) vocational-technical fields leading to employment, and (c) general or liberal arts courses. (Master Plan, p. 2)

The Plan embraced the Community Colleges as the third segment of and full partner in public higher education, and affirmed the commitment to partnership by recommending that the senior segments reduce their lower division enrollments in relation to those of the upper division and graduate levels in a way which would divert some 40,000 students to the "junior" colleges by 1975. Recommended changes in freshman admissions requirements in the senior segments were expected to produce another 10,000 students who would be diverted to the two-year colleges. In addition, enrollment projections for "adult education" students showed a declining percentage in the Community Colleges (from 69.3 percent in 1960 to 58.5 percent in 1970), compared with the other segments where enrollments of adult students were expected to more than double.

Thus the 1960 Master Plan attempted to make the Community Colleges more like the senior segments by diverting large numbers of students who would normally have enrolled in these institutions as freshmen, and by emphasizing programs leading to transfer or competency for employment, for full- and part-time students meeting "the same entrance and matriculation standards." In spite of these recommendations and predictions, the California Community Colleges have become less--not more--like the University of California and the State University and Colleges during the years since the Master Plan, as a result of the new kinds of students they are attracting, the varying objectives of these nontraditional students, and the nature of the programs and services offered to meet their needs. It appears that four-year institutions may be becoming more like the Community Colleges in the years ahead, in terms of enrolling more part-time students, offering instruction away from the major campuses, and recognizing student objectives other than completion of baccalaureate degree programs and entry into graduate and professional schools.

The phenomenon of the "new student in higher education" is of course not unique to the California Community Colleges, although

they have been in the forefront in attracting and providing for such students. Furthermore, the "new student" is not a single type of student on whom all higher education has focused attention. Instead, the "new student" about whom the Community Colleges were first concerned was the middle-class high school graduate who was unprepared for college-level work, usually from a family with no record of prior college attendance. By the late 1960's, the "new student" emphasis was on those from minority racial/ethnic backgrounds who also enrolled with deficiencies in basic skills for college work, often more serious than those displayed by the former "new students." Attention was first given to Blacks as the major new student clientele, then to other minorities whose enrollments in higher education were disproportionate to their incidence in the population at large. Most recently the "new student" emphasis has been on part-time students who have been out of school for several years (including women whose education was interrupted by marriage and childrearing), skilled workers who are unemployed or underemployed for various reasons, senior citizens, and others whose objectives do not fit the traditional transfer and occupational categories. Still other clienteles among the "new students" attracted to Community Colleges are the physically and otherwise handicapped; the institutionalized in prisons and hospitals; and the young who are leaving high school before the age of 18 or getting a head start on college before high school graduation.

The strength of the Community Colleges has been their ability to respond individually and collectively to State and local needs for new programs and services relatively quickly and often without the infusion of new, special funds. Their weakness--if it may be called such--has been their inability to quantify and measure their success in responding to the needs of these successive groups of new students with nontraditional, often idiosyncratic objectives. They display diverse, discontinous enrollment patterns. They register for courses which do not constitute an organized curriculum. They take longer (or less time) to complete their objectives and programs. They may be tagged as "lost" in the college records when they move between institutions without transcripts and away from the communities where they got their start in postsecondary education.

One kind of evidence of the growing presence of new student clienteles in the Community Colleges is found in the statistical enrollment reports for the past five years. These are an inadequate reflection of the diversity of students who make up the enrollment increases, in terms of both student characteristics and educational, career, and personal objectives. Case histories help to tell the story of these new students but they are anecdotal and thus unsuitable for generalizing about Community College successes or projecting future enrollments. Tables 1 and 2 illustrate the differential growth in Community College enrollments between 1969 and 1974, and resulting changes in the

TABLE 1

Percentage Changes in Selected Categories of Enrollment: 1969-1974*

Enrollment Category	Comparison Years			
	1969-1972	1972-1973	1973-1974	1969-1974
Graded Classes:				
Full-time	+ 10%	+ 7%	+ 6%	+ 25%
Part-time	+ 28	+24	+16	+ 85
Defined Adult	+ 16	+31	+17	+ 78
Total	+ 20	+18	+13	+ 59
Classes for Adults	+ 65	-20	+13	+ 49
Day:				
Graded	+ 24	+ 5	+13	+ 48
Classes for Adults	+106	+15	+36	+220
Evening:				
Graded	+ 14	+40	+12	+ 78
Classes for Adults	+ 58	-28	+ 4	+ 19
Grand Total	+ 28%	+10%	+13%	+ 57%

* Enrollments for all California Community Colleges are included in the computations. Grand total enrollment in 1969 was 722,480; in 1974, 1,137,668. (Source: CCC Form CCAF-130). See Appendix B for definitions of terms.

composition of the student body. The statistics for the early years are confounded by changes in the way students were counted; for example, by technical changes in the classification of courses as "classes for adults" or "graded classes." Furthermore, the increasing crossover of students between day and evening classes is not reflected in the statistics since students enrolled for as little as one class scheduled before 4:30 p.m. are classified as "day" students. Still, Table 1 demonstrates the significantly greater enrollment of part-time students between 1969 and 1974, particularly students at least 21 years of age who were enrolled for less than 10 hours per week (less than a half-time student). Table 2 shows

TABLE 2

Distribution of Students Among Selected Enrollment Categories: 1969, 1972, 1973, and 1974*
(In Percents)

Enrollment Category	Year			
	1969	1972	1973	1974
Grand Total:				
Graded	83%	79%	84%	84%
Classes for Adults	17	21	16	16
Graded:				
Full-time	43	39	36	34
Part-time	57	61	64	66
Defined Adults as percent of:				
Total Graded	38	29	41	43
Total Classes for Adults	83	78	77	72
Grand Total:				
Day	54	54	52	53
Evening	46%	46%	48%	47%

* Enrollments for all California Community Colleges are included in the computations. Grand total enrollment in 1969 was 722,480; in 1974, 1,137,668. (Source: CCC Form CCAF-130)

that part-time students in credit classes now constitute about two-thirds of the enrollment--up from 57 percent in 1969. Part-time students at least 21 years of age constitute at least 43 percent of the enrollment in credit classes--up from 38 percent in 1969. At the same time, non-credit classes for adults have been enrolling a declining percentage of older part-time students since 1969 (a decrease from 83 percent in 1969 to 72 percent in 1974), with a concomitant increase in the percentage of younger students and full-time students over 21 years of age. Caution is urged in interpreting other percentages in the tables which may be the result of technical changes in the classification of courses between 1969 and 1972, and between 1972 and 1973. Still other large changes to which attention has not been called were an artifact of small numbers at the outset.

Continuation of different rates of increase in the enrollments of full-time versus part-time students in continuing education programs is bringing about some fundamental changes in the nature of the Community Colleges, with a de-emphasis on prescribed curricula leading to degrees and certificates, and transfer to four-year institutions; course credits and grades; and certain student services designed to meet the needs of recent high school graduates. As this has happened, the Community Colleges are no longer viewed as an extension of the secondary schools, or as a "junior" higher education institution but, instead, as a uniquely community-based, postsecondary institution with the flexibility and resources to meet the needs of all kinds of adult students.

Genesis of the Study

Reports made to the Coordinating Council for Higher Education over a period of years had called attention to the need for broad-scale studies of undergraduate students and the programs they pursue. In 1970, Council members were asked by the Director to recommend priorities for study among a series of issues in higher education related to the Council's functions. Among the 15 issues suggested, the two given highest priority were problems of student access to persistence in higher education.

Council members were not alone in asking for more information about undergraduate students and programs. The Legislative Analyst, the Department of Finance, and the Joint Committee for the Master Plan for Higher Education all in turn sought information about the extent to which the Community Colleges in particular were fulfilling their basic functions as indicated by student performance and persistence.

The 1972 study plan contained the following prefatory statement in the rationale for undertaking the study:

> The California Community Colleges are enrolling an ever increasing proportion of the young people who would have attended the University of California or the California State University and Colleges in former years. At the same time, they are attracting vast numbers of students whose family backgrounds do not include a tradition of college attendance. While the Community Colleges have assumed the major responsibility for providing access to postsecondary education for a majority of Californians, no major studies have yet been undertaken of student persistence and flow into and through these institutions on a statewide basis.

A staff analysis of what was known about California Community College students in 1972, excluding enrollment statistics, showed that:

About transfer: Student follow-up studies had been concerned primarily with the success of transfer students in the University of California and the State University and College systems. The evidence of success was consistently positive when grade-point averages after transfer and persistence to the baccalaureate degree were examined. However, more than two-thirds of the Community College students were expressing an intent to transfer when they first enrolled but fewer than one-third were known to have done so, with no information available about the group which intended to but did not transfer.

About degrees and certificates: The ratio of associate degrees and certificates awarded to total enrollment was about 78 awards per 1,000 students in credit courses. When students who transferred to the State University and Colleges without having earned degrees were added to the ratio, about 100 students per 1,000 enrollment could be accounted for in terms of degrees awarded and/or transfer.

About what is not known: As Community College enrollments approached the one million figure in the 1970's, there appeared to be at least three-quarter million students whose patterns of enrollment and performance did not fit the stereotype of the transfer and/or degree-oriented student.

It was in this context that the Legislature passed Senate Bill 772 in 1972, assigning to the Coordinating Council for Higher Education the responsibility for conducting a study of "... the extent to which the California Community College system is fulfilling its purposes and achieving its objectives." The introductory section of the statute states in part:

> The Legislature hereby finds that California has one of the most mature and far-reaching systems of community colleges in the nation; that the rapid growth of that system necessitates a review of the goals and programs of the California Community College system so that it may assist the state more effectively in serving the educational needs of its people; that the need for a major study of Community College programs is long overdue; ...

Particular reference was made in the statute to the need to examine the characteristics of students completing various types of programs

in comparison with those who do not, attrition and reentry rates, employability of students not completing programs, and the need for additional access to postsecondary education and related services.

Work began in September 1972 on the development of a comprehensive study plan and the selection of colleges to participate in the study. An advisory committee was appointed which included Community College administrators, trustees, deans of students, institutional research officers, and staff from the system offices of the three public segments of higher education. The committee reviewed and advised Council staff about the study plan and its subsequent implementation. The committee was also asked to review drafts of annual progress reports to the Legislature and substantive reports which were published during the course of the study. Titles of the reports were: Sources and Selected Characteristics of Students, 32,000 Students in 32 Colleges, The Other Side of Persistence, and A Limited View of Performance.

In April 1974 the California Postsecondary Education Commission replaced the Coordinating Council for Higher Education and assumed responsibility for studies previously assigned to the Council by the Legislature, as well as new functions contained in the statute which created the Commission. A liaison committee reviewed the work being done by the Council staff and recommended that the Community College study proceed as planned. Under the reorganization of staff and functions which ensued, the study was assigned to the Information Systems Division and to the Commission's Standing Committee on Information Systems. The advisory committee to the study was reconstituted in the Fall of 1975 so as to increase membership with local responsibility for policy making and planning.

Study Plans and Activities

Thirty-two Community Colleges were selected for participation in the study in 1972 so as to be representative of the 96 institutions then in existence. Thirty-two was judged to be both an adequate sample of institutions and the maximum number which staff could reasonably work with in a way that would insure some understanding of local policies, programs, and priorities. The sample of colleges was selected on the basis of size of total enrollment, full-time enrollment as a percentage of total enrollment, percentage of racial/ethnic minority enrollment, estimated percentage enrollment with family incomes under $5,000, percentage enrollment by sex, age of the institution, and geography (urban/suburban/rural, and location in the State in relation to area planning regions for vocational/technical education as provided in the Education Code). The profile

of the colleges thus selected resembled the statistical and geographical profile of all California Community Colleges at the time the study was started.

The President and/or Superintendent of each college was then contacted by Commission staff by telephone to explain and invite participation in the study. Telephone calls were followed by letters which explained the requirements of the study in greater detail. Administrators of all colleges selected for the sample responded positively to the invitation to participate and designated local liaison officers to coordinate data collection and other study activities. Commission staff visited each campus and district early in the study to assist local staff in carrying out the procedures for selecting the sample of students to be studied and gathering data. Subsequent visits have been made to most campuses to discuss progress and findings. In addition, staff has met periodically with various regional and statewide groups of Community College personnel to inform and get advice from them about the conduct and interpretation of the study.

The following six questions from the original study plan served as a guide to data collection and analysis:

1. How many and what kinds of Community College students do not persist to the end of each successive term after initial registration and do not return after completing a particular term?

2. In what ways do the nonpersisters differ from their classmates who enroll in continuous attendance to the associate degree and/or transfer? What can the colleges do to increase retention of more students to the place where they earn degrees or transfer, by making changes in policies, programs, and services?

3. What is the employment experience of Community College students who do not complete a prescribed curriculum in an occupational field or a transfer program? Are students who have undertaken occupational education programs more successful in obtaining employment than students who have had only general education before seeking regular employment?

4. What is the degree of success of "stopouts" who reenter postsecondary education within a few years of leaving the Community College? How do their new objectives differ from their initial intentions, e.g., occupational versus transfer goals?

5. What are the needs of former Community College students for continuing education for career and/or personal development? What kinds of new approaches might meet these varying needs?

6. What are the characteristics of enrollees in non-credit classes? How many have educational needs which lead to their reenrollment in successive terms, once their initial course is completed?

As the study progressed, it became apparent that the questions were based on two somewhat invalid assumptions. The first is that persistence is necessarily good and to be expected from semester to semester, and from year to year, in curricula leading to degrees and certificates and/or transfer. The assumption ignores the increasing majority of Community College students who are enrolled in programs of continuing education of their own design, whose objectives are achieved in non-traditional patterns of enrollment. The second invalid assumption involves an expectation that Community College students are employed only after completing (or dropping out of) occupational and transfer programs. It ignores the growing number of students who are employed adults and women whose family responsibilities will keep them out of the job market for a time, and who are enrolled in courses (not curricula) for various educational, occupational, and personal reasons. Thus, their employment status is not necessarily changed as a result of their Community College enrollment.

A third error made by staff in developing the study plan and formulating the questions was in expecting that students in non-credit classes (so-called classes for adults) could be sampled and studied in the same manner as other students. Initial efforts to outline procedures produced the following findings which led to the abandonment of this phase of the study:

1. "Classes for adults" offered by most colleges in the sample in 1972 were in effect regular, credit courses scheduled after 4:30 p.m. Students enrolled for credit in such courses were included in the enrollment pools from which the samples were drawn for study, with no distinction made between them and students enrolled in evening "credit" courses.

2. Inadequate information was available about the nature and volume of enrollment in non-credit classes which were not simply credit courses offered after 4:30 p.m., for purposes of drawing a sample for study.

3. Enrollment in other than credit-type classes appeared to be concentrated in two of the 32 colleges in the sample--San Francisco and San Diego Community College Districts--with no (or negligible) enrollments in most of the participating colleges.

4. College record keeping for students in non-credit classes is very minimal. Study requirements for student information would have necessitated special data collection for which no budgetary provision had been made.

From the findings in the study, no generalizations can be made from students enrolled in credit courses to those enrolled in classes for adults.

Local pools of students from which random samples were drawn included all new students enrolled for credit in the census week. ("New" is defined as not having been enrolled for credit on the particular campus during any term other than a summer session.) The size of the sample was established as 10 percent of the pool of students produced by the definition. Exceptions were made for small colleges which were asked to draw samples of 500 students (or to include all new students in the pool, when the number was less than 500), and colleges with more than 20,000 students in the defined pool, which were asked to draw less than 10 percent of the sample (or about 2,000 students).

The characteristics of each sample thus produced were examined to make sure that no systematic error had been made in drawing the sample. In other words, checks were made on the sample to make sure that there was representation of both day and evening students, part-time and full-time students, firt-time freshmen and transfers, men and women, minorities and Caucasian students. In several instances new samples were drawn from new pools when this examination showed an obvious bias in the sample. Furthermore, students have been dropped from the study when new information showed that they did not meet the criteria for inclusion, that is, students who had been enrolled at the college during an earlier regular term.

Data Collection Activities

Data have been collected over a period of seven regular academic terms for approximately 35,000 students who enrolled for credit for the first time in one of 32 California Community Colleges in the Fall 1972 term. Initial data collection produced information about the demographic characteristics of the students, including their prior educational attainment and their expectations with

regard to major, degree or certificate, and transfer. Characteristics data have been updated annually for students who enrolled in the fall term. The information has been obtained from records maintained by the colleges, usually in their computers, and thus is limited to items of information which the colleges collect for State and federal reporting and/or local use. The administration of special questionnaires to the students while they were enrolled was not feasible because of cost and timing. The effective date of the legislation creating the study was well after the opening of the semester when students who were enrolled for the first time would be studied.

Information has been obtained from the colleges each term relating to the persistence and performance of students during that term. Courses attempted, courses completed, grades received, withdrawals and drops from courses, and enrollment in the next consecutive term have all been recorded, together with any actions placing students on academic probation or dismissing them for scholarship reasons. Lists of students who were awarded degrees and certificates have been prepared annually, and colleges were requested to supply information about students who had transcripts sent to institutions to which they might transfer. Information was also obtained annually concerning the award of financial aid to students in the sample, including veterans' and other benefits.

All colleges were able to comply with requests for annual demographic and enrollment data. However, it was not feasible for some colleges to provide information on transcript requests and student financial aid awarded on an annual basis since neither type of information was in the computer systems of most colleges.

Changes in Conditions Since 1972

Much has happened since 1972 to create changes in the climate in which the Community Colleges serve their communities. The most significant change is probably the ending of the draft in 1972, together with the termination of the war in Vietnam. Changes which have tended to have the opposite effect on Community College enrollments center on the currently high rate of unemployment in California and economic conditions, generally. At the same time, student financial aid has become available to some Community College students for the first time, including students enrolled part time.

It appears that changes in societal conditions since 1972 would not produce contrary findings about patterns of enrollment and performance in the Community Colleges if the study had been repeated with samples of students registering for the first time

in the Fall 1975 term. Instead, current conditions would probably reveal that larger percentages of students were displaying non-traditional patterns of enrollment, including greater mobility between institutions. Increased student financial aid appears to be the main condition that might increase continuity of enrollment and/or full-timeness in the Community Colleges and elsewhere.

II. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE STUDENTS STUDIED

Prior Educational Experiences

All students in the sample were reported to be enrolled for credit in the fourth census week of the Fall 1972 term and to be new to the campus with the exception of prior summer session enrollment. The sample thus produced is shown in Table 3 by enrollment and admissions status. Nearly two-thirds of the students were enrolled primarily in courses offered before 4:30 p.m., but only 37 percent of the sample was enrolled full time. However, the incidence of crossover enrollments between day and evening was significant in 1972 and is increasing.

TABLE 3

Distribution of Students in the Study by Time of Day Enrolled and Admissions Status

Time of Day Enrolled	Admissions Status		Total	
	Freshman	Transfer	N	%
Day: Full-time	30%	7%	12,671	37%
Part-time	18	7	8,561	25
Evening: Part-time	22	16	13,013	38
Total: Number	23,972	10,273	34,245	--
Percent	70%	30%	--	100%

Seventy percent of the students in the sample reported no prior enrollment in any collegiate institution when applying for admission. However, it must be kept in mind that these "freshmen" ranged in age from 15 years (for students still in high school who were enrolled for college coursework) to 70 years and over. Ten percent had not completed high school and were unlikely to do so, and 43 percent of the graduates who entered as freshmen had been out of high school at least one year after graduation.

Table 4 displays the location of the high schools from which the new freshmen graduated, by year of graduation and approximate age. Eighty-four percent of the graduates who attended college right after high school were from schools located in the college districts. The percentage is somewhat misleading, however, since this "typical" freshman represents only one-third of the total sample studied. The data in the table point up the high correlation between age and location of the high school from which the student graduated with 60 percent of the new students over 30 years of age having received their secondary education in other states. A relatively high percentage (32%) of high school dropouts in the Community Colleges also received their secondary education in other states and other districts (26%). However, the dropouts accounted for only 10 percent of the sample studied, exclusive of the 3 percent who were still enrolled in high school while attending college.

The labels of both "freshman" and "transfer" are somewhat confusing. The latter describes students who declare on their application for admission that they have previously attended one or more collegiate institutions. Such attendance ranges from enrollment at another Community College, sometimes with no credit earned, to completion of a graduate program. In many cases students are not "transferring to" the Community College and their prior collegiate work is unrelated to their objectives in attending the college. Other students transfer after enrolling for a short time in a four-year institution and do in fact transfer their prior record of achievement to the Community College. A group of transfer students which appears to be increasing involves students from four-year institutions who enroll in occupational programs leading directly to employment after two years (or less) in the Community Colleges.

Student records at most Community Colleges show only the prior institutions attended and dates of attendance with no evaluation of prior work or record of degrees earned unless the student asks that credits earned be transferred to the Community College. Thus, there appears to be no reliable way of describing the precise nature of the prior educational experiences of the transfer students. However, follow-up activities have revealed that students with baccalaureate and advanced degrees enroll in Community Colleges with a variety of personal and career objectives.

Table 5 displays the types of institutions attended by transfer students by age grouping. It is interesting to note that nearly half of all transfer students came from other California Community Colleges, and that more than half the transfer students 21 years of age and younger originated in other Community Colleges. The second largest source of transfer students (26%) was found to be out-of-state institutions. The group includes both young students

TABLE 4

Location of High Schools Attended by First-Time Freshmen
Including High School Graduates, Dropouts, and
Students Still in High School
(In Percents)

Year of High School Graduation or Other Status	Approximate Age	Location of High School				Total First-Time Freshmen	
		In District	In State*	Total California**	Out-of-State**	N	%
1972	18	84%	13%	97%	3%	11,713	49%
1971	19	60	23	84	16	1,335	6
1970	20	63	21	84	16	1,060	4
1965-69	21-25	36	27	65	35	2,749	11
1960-64	26-30	23	28	54	46	1,326	6
Before 1960	Over 30	14	25	40	60	2,490	10
Sub-Total	--	63	18	82	18	20,673	86
High School Dropouts	--	40	26	68	32	2,520	11
Still in High School	16-17	95	5	100	0	779	3
Total	--	62%	18%	81%	19%	23,972	100%

* "In State" percentages do not include students in the "In District" category.

** Students at Los Angeles City and Trade-Technical Colleges are included only in the "Total California" and "Out of State" percentages because of insufficient information about the location of high school.

TABLE 5

Types of Colleges Last Attended by New Transfer Students by Age
(In Percents)

Age At Admission	Type of Institution Last Attended						Total	
	California Community College	California State University	University of California	California Private Institution	Out-of-State Institution	Foreign Institution	N	%
18 & Under	62%	10%	4%	8%	14%	2%	302	3%
19-21	56	11	5	8	19	1	2,145	21
22-24	49	12	6	6	26	1	2,054	20
25-29	45	13	6	5	28	3	2,314	23
30-34	45	12	6	7	26	4	1,264	12
35 & Over	37	11	9	8	32	3	2,194	21
Total: N	4,828	1,233	616	719	2,671	206	10,273	--
Percent	47%	12%	6%	7%	26%	2%	--	100%

who return to their home community to enroll in the local Community College after a year or two out of state, and adults in continuing education who have moved to California after having attended out-of-state institutions following graduation from high school.

Twenty-five percent of the transfer students in the study had previously attended a California four-year institution. The table illustrates very well the heterogeneity of the transfer students in terms of both age and type of prior institution attended. Thirty percent may indeed be an underestimate of the volume of transfer students in the sample since students may not wish to declare prior college attendance, particularly when their earlier experience produced poor grades and transcripts of such work are required. The follow-up of students enrolled for only one term in the Community Colleges in the sample has produced evidence of students moving between collegiate institutions without the benefit of transcripts, sometimes simply because they lack interest in obtaining transfer credit. Still another group which is not clearly distinguished by current enrollment reporting includes students enrolled concurrently in other collegiate institutions who may be utilizing the Community College as a means of satisfying a particular requirement.

Age and Sex

The age and sex of the students studied are displayed in Table 6, by admission as a high school graduate, transfer student or high school dropout. The table shows that men comprised 53 percent of the sample and women 47 percent. Differences between men and women by age group are not significant for purposes of educational planning and appear to reflect simply the phenomenon that women graduating from high school are about one year younger than men. Similarly, differences between the percentages of men and women in the three categories of admission are slight with proportionally more males in the high school dropout and transfer groups.

Ethnicity

The determination of the racial/ethnic identification of college students was held to be illegal during the period when efforts were made to insure that discrimination was not practiced against applicants on the basis of their racial and ethnic backgrounds. This ruling produced a situation in which no information could be obtained about the ethnicity of college students, at a time when serious efforts were being made to increase their numbers and percentages in higher education. Thus, while prohibitions remained against requiring and recording racial/ethnic information, the federal government began in 1968 to require colleges and universities

TABLE 6

Percentage Distribution of Ages of New Students Admitted as High School Graduates, High School Dropouts, and Transfer Students, by Sex (In Percents)

Age	Sex	Total		Admissions Status		
		N	%	High School Graduate	High School Dropout	Transfer Student
18 & under	M	4,597	28%	44%	13%	2%
	F	4,536	31	47	16	3
19-21	M	3,361	21	21	22	19
	F	2,859	20	18	15	24
22-24	M	2,376	15	11	16	21
	F	1,592	11	7	12	18
25-29	M	2,398	15	9	16	25
	F	1,826	12	8	17	20
30-34	M	1,259	8	5	11	12
	F	1,165	8	6	9	12
35-44	M	1,327	8	5	13	12
	F	1,451	10	8	17	13
45-54	M	699	4	3	7	6
	F	825	6	4	10	8
55-64	M	220	1	1	2	2
	F	235	2	1	3	2
65 & Over	M	43	<1	<1	<1	<1
	F	45	<1	<1	1	<1
Total	M	16,280	53	59	9	32
	F	14,534	47	62	7	31
	T	30,814	100	60%	8%	32%

to report such information for their enrolled students. The results have been unsatisfactory from every point of view--students who protest against the inquiry by giving false information or refusing to do so; institutions which are puzzled about how to comply without breaking the law; and State and federal agencies which receive institutional reports of unknown validity.

Still, interest in ethnicity is high, particularly in the Community Colleges where efforts to attract students from minority backgrounds apparently have been successful. Passage of legislation in 1969 which created and provided State funding for the Educational Opportunity Program and Services was an essential stimulus for such activity, doing much to insure the success in colleges of minority students who were educationally and economically disadvantaged. Community Colleges use a variety of methods to survey their students with respect to ethnicity. Five colleges in the study were unable to provide this information for students in the samples which were drawn.

Characteristics of students with minority racial/ethnic identification in the 27 colleges providing such data are displayed in Table 7, with comparable information shown for other than minority students. Twenty-four percent of the students in the sample declared themselves on first enrollment to be other than Caucasian, which is the same percentage as that found for all students in the California Community Colleges in the Fall 1973 term. Among those who made this declaration, 39 percent said that they were Black (or some equivalent description); 32 percent, Spanish-surnamed or Chicano; 14 percent, Oriental; 4 percent, American Indian; and 15 percent, "other." Fifty-five percent of the minority group was male; 45 percent, female.

Compared with the Caucasian majority, the minority group includes a smaller percentage of students with prior college experience (a 3 to 1 ratio of first-time freshmen to transfers for the minority group, compared with a ratio of 2.2 to 1 for Caucasians). The minority group also included a smaller percentage of students who were 45 years of age or older. The relative proportions of men and women were found to be about the same for the minority and majority group.

Marital Status

Married and formerly married students constituted about 29 percent of the sample from the 25 Community Colleges which were able to provide information about their students' marital status. Thirty percent of the women and 27 percent of the men reported that they

TABLE 7

Comparison of Students with Minority Racial/Ethnic Identification with Other New Students, by Age, Sex, and First-Time vs. Transfer Student Admissions Status*

Age	Minority Students				Other Students			
			Total				Total	
	First-Time Freshmen	Transfer	N	%	First-Time Freshmen	Transfer	N	%
18 & Under	37%	< 1%	1,984	28%	47%	2%	7,441	33%
19-21	23	22	1,613	23	18	22	4,350	19
22-24	10	21	931	13	9	21	2,878	13
25-29	12	23	1,043	15	8	21	2,803	12
30-44	14	27	1,220	17	13	25	3,774	16
45 & Over	4	7	311	4	5	9	1,538	7
Total:								
Men	55	55	3,858	54	52	53	11,903	52
Women	45	45	3,244	46	48	47	10,881	48
Total	100%	100%	7,102	100%	100%	100%	22,784	100%

were married or formerly married. Nearly half of the married students were over 30 years of age when they first enrolled. Only 7 percent were under 21. The percentage of formerly married women in the sample was found to be twice that of men. Only 17 percent of the married students were enrolled full time, compared with 39 percent of those who were single. Forty-six percent were enrolled for three units or less (usually one course), compared with 28 percent of the group which was single. The percentage of married men who were enrolled full time was significantly higher than that obtained for the women (21 and 12 percent, respectively).

No information was available concerning the number of children in the families of married and formerly married students.

Other Student Characteristics

Colleges in the sample collect very little information about their students which is not required for reports to the State and federal governments. Information about family background, socioeconomic status, and employment would have been useful in analyzing student performance and persistence but was not available from the college records of students who do not apply for student financial aid. No attempt was made to obtain such information for applicants for aid since the information was seldom found in the computer records and, in any case, is regarded as highly confidential.

One type of information which was provided by the colleges but not used in the analysis, on the advice of the colleges, is student declaration of intent with respect to major and degree and transfer objectives. Students normally make these choices before they actually enroll--often before they are counseled, and may have changed their objectives before the beginning of the first term. Still others are undecided when they first enroll and may remain undecided throughout their enrollment. Others declare their objectives in what appears to be an unreliable fashion insofar as the programs of courses in which they enroll is not compatible with their declared objectives. Finally, there is little consistency among the colleges in the manner in which they ask for declaration of objectives; some appear to assume that all students are degree- or transfer-oriented and others provide the student with a full range of educational and personal objectives from which to choose. Therefore, the advice of the colleges was followed and information about student objectives was omitted from the analysis.

III. STUDENT BEHAVIOR IN COURSES AND PROGRAMS

Background

Student performance in colleges and universities has been expressed traditionally in terms of grades, grade-point averages, and test scores. Validation of grades and grade-point averages has usually rested on measures of student performance at the next highest level, that is, success in graduate and professional school by students completing baccalaureate degree programs, the passing of licensure examinations by students completing occupational and professional programs, and success in upper division programs by students transferring from Community Colleges. The latter type of successful performance has been demonstrated again and again in State and national studies of Community College transfer students. Such students earn grades which compare favorably with those earned before transfer and by "native" students of comparable ability; they persist in degree programs in satisfactory numbers; and they experience relatively little difficulty in completing degree programs in a timely manner.

However, the number of Community College students who transfer to four-year institutions to undertake baccalaureate programs is small when compared with the total enrollment in the Community Colleges. Out of a total of more than one million students enrolled for credit in the Community Colleges part-time and full-time, day and evening, with diverse backgrounds and objectives, about 41,000 transferred to the University of California or the California State University and Colleges, and an unknown number of other types of four-year institutions to pursue baccalaureate degrees. Thus, the study was undertaken in an attempt to describe the patterns of enrollment and performance of the vast majority of Community College students--those who do not transfer with the intent of completing baccalaureate degrees.

The study also assumed at the outset that few students (probably less than 10 percent) would be completing associate degrees and certificates, based on federal reports of such awards for the several past years. Therefore, the amount of attention to be given to this subpopulation in the study has been limited intentionally. Instead, the major focus has been placed on students who neither transfer into baccalaureate programs nor earn associate degrees.

Few measures are now available to describe students with short-term, limited objectives in the Community Colleges, or those in noncontinuous enrollment whose long-term objectives are often unclear. Patterns of enrollment and performance in courses as

measured by grades are the major descriptors which could be used in the study for these large subpopulations. Their use is based on the assumption that persistence from semester to semester is not a valid criterion for evaluating the performance of most Community College students, and that failure to persist does not imply failure on the part of either the students or the colleges.

Ideally, Community Colleges would evaluate student performance in terms of student objectives--educational, career, and personal. While the colleges now ask students to indicate their goals and objectives when they apply for admission or register, the manner in which this information is obtained casts doubt on its reliability and validity. Comparisons of declared objectives with programs and courses in which students actually enroll lead to the conclusion that there is often little relationship between the two types of evidence. Therefore, no attempt has been made in the study to use student declaration of objectives as a basis for evaluating performance.

Patterns of Enrollment

Patterns of enrollment for the first six terms have been analyzed by age at time of entering the Community College, sex, part-time versus full-time status, and by freshman versus transfer admission. Table 8 shows the results of the analysis for subgroups organized on the basis of admission and enrollment status. Table 9 displays the results of the analysis by age grouping, admissions status, and sex. All students in the study were put into one of five end-of-study groups based on their status at the end of the sixth semester or ninth quarter, as follows:

1. Enrollment for at least two consecutive, regular college terms;

2. Still enrolled at the end of the sixth semester or ninth quarter;

3. Received an associate degree or certificate in one of the four enrollment patterns;

4. Was enrolled for more than one term but did not persist in continuous attendance; and

5. Enrolled for only the first term during the three-year period studied.

Information has also been collected on enrollments of students in the Fall 1975 term, or seventh semester.

Table 8 shows clearly that the persistence and graduation rates of full-time freshman and transfer students are significantly higher than those of part-time day and evening students. Thirty-one percent of the full-time students (31 percent of the freshmen and 36 percent of the transfers) were enrolled for one or more terms during the study on a noncontinuous basis, compared with 68 percent of the part-time day and 66 percent of the evening students. Analysis of degrees and certificates awarded during the three-year period showed that 17 percent of the full-time students (16 percent of the freshmen and 18 percent of the transfers) earned such awards, compared with 3 percent of the part-time day and evening students. Percentages of students still enrolled at the end of the sixth semester do not differ significantly among the various subgroups. Continuity of male enrollments in part-time programs, particularly in evening classes, is somewhat greater than that of women in the same category. Fifty-nine percent of the men in the part-time freshman group and 56 percent in the transfer group enrolled for more than one semester, compared with about 50 percent of the part-time women students in both groups.

The results of the analysis by year of high school graduation and age grouping, displayed in Table 9, show a strong correlation between age and status at the end of the study. The relationship exists for both freshman and transfer students, and for both men and women. Students who had graduated from high school the year they entered the Community College, or who transferred to a Community College at age 18, are much more likely to continue for more than one term at that institution and to earn degrees and certificates than students who do not enroll until they are past 21 years of age.

Of particular interest in the table are the higher rates of completion of degree and certificate programs for males over the age of 21, compared with women students. The male transfer students in the 22 to 29 age group are for the most part veterans who began their postsecondary education in a four-year institution before entering the military service. Male students also showed a somewhat greater tendency than the women to continue in attendance through the three years of the study. Some whose records have been examined at length have completed associate degree programs in occupational fields and are continuing their education in liberal arts areas.

Women between the ages of 22 and 30 often enrolled for only one semester. Responses to a letter sent to students in this group often revealed that the women wanted very much to return to the Community College when their children were older. Women over 45 years of age also showed a tendency to enroll for just one semester when it was their first experience in college.

TABLE 8

Status of the Students at the End of the Third Year (In Percents)

Type of Enrollment	Sex	Status				
		Persisted 2+ Terms*	Still Enrolled	Grad-uated	In and Out	One Term Only
Full-time: Freshmen	M	44%	9%	16%	17%	14%
	F	45	8	18	15	14
	T	44	9	16	17	14
Transfers	M	42	5	18	16	19
	F	42	3	19	15	21
	T	42	4	18	16	20
Total	T	44	8	17	16	15
Part-time Day: Freshmen	M	23	6	3	25	43
	F	25	5	3	22	45
	T	25	5	3	23	44
Transfers	M	23	4	4	20	49
	F	24	4	4	19	49
	T	24	4	4	19	49
Total	T	24	5	3	22	46
Part-time Evening: Freshmen	M	28	9	2	20	41
	F	22	4	1	20	53
	T	25	6	2	20	47
Transfers	M	26	7	5	18	44
	F	24	3	2	19	52
	T	25	5	3	19	48
Total	T	25	6	3	19	47
Total Sample	T	32%	6%	8%	19%	35%

*Enrolled for at least two consecutive terms without withdrawing from all classes. Graduates are reported only in the column so labeled and each student is counted only once.

TABLE 9

Status of the Students at the End of the Third Year
by Age, Sex, and Freshman vs. Transfer
(In Percents)

Year of High School Graduate	Age	Freshman/ Transfer	Sex	Status				
				Persisted 2+ Terms*	Still Enrolled	Graduated	In and Out	One Term Only
Still in High School	Under 18	Fr.	M	16%	1%	0%	23%	60%
			F	35	8	2	37	18
1972	18	Fr.	M	39	9	13	19	20
			F	41	7	16	17	19
		Tr.	M	36	4	18	22	20
			F	34	9	18	13	26
1969-71	19-21	Fr.	M	31	5	5	23	36
			F	24	3	4	22	47
		Tr.	M	34	3	8	20	35
			F	25	3	6	19	47
1961-68	22-29	Fr.	M	31	8	5	22	34
			F	25	3	2	19	51
		Tr.	M	27	5	9	19	40
			F	25	3	4	20	48
1946-60	30-45	Fr.	M	29	14	5	15	37
			F	24	8	3	17	48
		Tr.	M	29	9	6	16	40
			F	28	5	6	17	44
Before 1946	46 & over	Fr.	M	32	6	2	15	45
			F	26	5	2	14	53
		Tr.	M	28	8	3	15	46
			F	25	5	2	19	49
Total				32%	6%	8%	19%	35%

* Age when students enrolled in the Fall 1972 term.

** Enrolled for at least two consecutive terms without withdrawing from all classes. Graduates are reported only in the column so labeled and each student is counted only once in the table.

The two tables may be summarized in the statistics that about one-third of the part-time day and evening students were in continuous enrollment for two semesters or more, and that this enrollment group has a smaller proportion of older students than do the groups with short-term or noncontinuous enrollment patterns. Furthermore, more than two-thirds of the full-time students have enrolled for at least two consecutive semesters, with 17 percent attaining degrees and certificates. This enrollment group has predominantly younger students who are recent high school graduates.

Enrollment to the end of the course was analyzed for students in the five end-of-study groups, to find out whether there are differences in their within-semester behavior. Only the first semester and quarter course enrollments were analyzed, since students who enrolled beyond the first term tended also to persist in subsequent courses for which they enrolled. The results of the analysis are shown in Figure 1 for the five groups. The persistence rates range from 30 units of credit earned per 100 units enrolled--for the students who were enrolled for only one term--to 89 units of credit earned per 100 units enrolled--for students who received associate degrees and certificates. Between the two extremes, students still enrolled at the end of the sixth semester completed 84 units for credit per 100 units enrolled; students who were enrolled for at least two consecutive terms, 80 units for credit per 100 enrolled; and students who enrolled sporadically, 47 units of credit per 100 enrolled. For the total study group, 64 units of credit were earned per 100 units enrolled.

The One-Time Student

Students who enrolled only once during the three years of the study constitute 35 percent of the total study sample; they are of particular interest because of the low rate of course completion which they displayed. Analysis of their records for the one term showed that they earned credit for less than one-third of the units for which they were enrolled in the census week. Nearly one-half of the group withdrew during the term with no courses completed, and others finished the term but earned no credit.

The basic characteristics of these nonpersisting students are summarized in Table 10.

One-half of the students who enrolled for only one semester during the three-year study were enrolled primarily in evening courses on a part-time basis. Eighty-seven percent of the total group of one-time students were enrolled part time in day or evening classes, or both since they represented less than two-thirds of the study

FIGURE 1

Analysis of the Relationship Between Units Attempted and Credit Earned by Various Subgroups of Students During Their First Term in the California Community Colleges

Note: all enrollments were in graded (credit) classes and students were reported as enrolled in the fourth, census week.

Students who earned associate degrees or certificates (8 percent of the sample): earned 89 units of credit per 100 units enrolled.

Students who enrolled during at least two consecutive semesters (31 percent of the sample): earned 80 units of credit per 100 units enrolled.

Students who enrolled through all six semesters without receiving an associate degree or certificate (7 percent of the sample): earned 84 units of credit per 100 units enrolled.

Students who attended only the first semester and did not reenroll during the three years (35 percent of the sample): earned 31 units of credit per 100 units enrolled.

Students who dropped out and reenrolled during the study (19 percent of the sample): 47 units of credit per 100 units enrolled.

All students in the sample (100%): 64 units of credit per 100 units enrolled.

group. It is clear that they had a greater tendency than other types of students to enroll only once. On the other hand, only 13 percent of the one-semester enrollment group were full-time students during that term.

The display in Table 10 simply represents in still another manner the findings reported earlier that part-time students have a much lower probability of continuing beyond the first term than that found for full-time students.

TABLE 10

Basic Characteristics of Nonpersisting Students: Age, Sex, Admission Status, and Enrollment Status (In Percents)

Age Group	Sex		Admissions Status		Enrollment Status			Total	
	Male	Female	Fresh-man	Trans-fer	Day Full-T	Day Part-T	Even-ing	N	%
21 and under	19%	21%	34%	6%	10%	18%	11%	4,794	40%
22 - 29	14	17	15	15	2	10	19	3,596	30
30 - 44	8	11	10	10	1	6	13	2,397	20
45 and over	4	6	6	4	1	3	7	1,199	10
Total	45%	55%	65%	35%	13%	37%	50%	11,986	100

Note: Percentages in each column add up to the sum shown in the "Total" row. Column totals add up to 100 percent for sex, admissions status, and enrollment status.

Women constituted only 47 percent of the study sample but accounted for 55 percent of the students who enrolled for only one term. The woman least likely to continue would be between the ages of 22 and 29 when she first enrolled in the Community College and would enroll as a part-time student in the evening. The finding is not surprising since this is the age group which is most likely to have young children with needs which interfere with college enrollment. Although the record of transfer students was as good generally as that of freshmen with respect to continuing enrollment, older transfer students with prior college experience were somewhat less likely to enroll again than were students with no previous college.

Age also related to status as a one-time student. While 50 percent of the students in the total study sample were 21 years of age or under when they first enrolled, this age group accounted for only 40 percent of the one-time students. On the other hand, students at least 45 years of age when they first enrolled comprised only 4 percent of the study sample but accounted for 10 percent of the students who discontinued during or at the completion of one term.

Findings From the Follow-Up

A letter was sent to a sample of the students at each college who had been enrolled there for only one term during the first three years of the study. In the letter, attention was called to the Governor's recent statements about State funding of adult and continuing education, particularly in the Community Colleges. Former students were asked to cooperate in the study in providing information about (1) the relationship of their coursework to their employment or career choices, (2) their enrollment in postsecondary programs in other institutions since 1972, and (3) their intent to enroll again in the same Community College or elsewhere. A self-addressed post card was enclosed for the response with an invitation to provide additional information in a letter if the respondent had other information which might be useful in the study.

Forty-eight percent of the one-time students were selected for the follow-up, including the total groups in the Sacramento area colleges and in those with fewer than 100 students in this enrollment category. Random sampling techniques were used to select students for follow-up in the remaining colleges. A total of 5,706 letters were sent out between August and October, 1975. Thirty-nine percent could not be delivered because of invalid addresses. In an attempt to secure valid mailing addresses of former students for whom letters were returned, both Polk city directories and telephone books for the areas served by the Community College they had attended were checked. Letters were remailed where new addresses were found

by these means. In addition, voter registration records were examined for Sacramento area students whose addresses found in college records were not valid. The finding that 39 percent of the one-time students could not be located by any of these methods is significant insofar as it reflects the mobility of Community College students and the California population, generally, about half of which moves at least once during a period of five years. Women who married and moved after leaving college were also difficult to locate when the "home address" they gave when registering was not the residence of their parents or when the parents also moved.

Forty-six percent of the sample of one-time students presumably received the follow-up letter but did not respond. The presumption is based on the failure of the letter to be returned to the Commission office. Since a second mailing to Sacramento students at apparently valid addresses produced an additional group of undeliverable letters, it appears that the percentage which received letters but did not respond is probably about 40. Still others may have not responded on the grounds that they did not complete any courses or may not have enrolled at all. The latter assumption is based on the assertions of a small group of respondents that they had registered but never enrolled at the particular college in the sample, although they had been reported as present in the census week.

No claim is made that the 15 percent response group is a random (or representative) sample of the total group which enrolled for only one semester. The non-respondent groups are, in fact, as important as those who answered the appeal for information in defense of adult and continuing education. First, it is significant that nearly 40 percent of the one-time students were not at the addresses where they resided in 1972 and could not be located in the area served by the college. The results of an attempt to locate these "lost" students in other Community Colleges are given on page 35. It is disappointing that an additional 46 percent would not put forth the effort to give short answers to three basic questions contained on a self-addressed post card.

The responses of the small respondent group have been analyzed on the grounds that the information provided is valid and useful in understanding one-time students, although no generalizations can be made to the larger group. The results of the analysis of post card responses concerning the relationship between coursework and employment are contained in Table 11.

TABLE 11

Summary of Information Provided by One-Time Students Concerning Relationships Between Coursework and Employment

(N = 856)

Category of Response	Percent Responding Positively*
Relationship between coursework and employment:	
Training for a new job	14%
Doing old job better	23
Getting promotion, more money	6
Making career decision	11
Total	54%
Lack of relationship because:	
Course did not help as expected	8
Course used to satisfy some degree or transfer requirement	6
Course not related to employment	32
Total	46%

* Each respondent was tabulated only once. Where multiple responses were given, the order in which the categories of response are shown in the table was followed in assigning the person to a category.

Fifty-four percent of the respondents reported that their coursework was related to their employment. Twenty-three percent said that the course(s) helped them do their old jobs better, while 14 percent said that they had received preparation for new jobs, including retraining. Six percent reported that they had received a promotion or higher salary as a result of their enrollment, while 11 percent said that the course(s) helped in making a career decision. In some cases, the decision was negative in that the student decided not to pursue the field in which the program was offered. Analysis of the student records showed that the enrollments were predominantly but not exclusively in occupational skill courses. The largest concentration of enrollment was in business courses, including real estate.

Respondents who said that their coursework was not related to their employment (46 percent of the respondents) were not enrolled exclusively in general education and personal development courses. The percentage in business-related courses was about half that found for respondents who said that their courses were helpful in employment (17 and 34 percent, respectively). Among those expressing a lack of relationship, 6 percent were enrolled simply to satisfy a particular transfer or degree requirement. Eight percent reported that courses were not helpful in the way that they had expected. Most of the "no relationship" group said that they had enrolled for self-development and personal growth, with no intention of having the work apply directly to employment.

A tabulation was made of the numbers of students who earned credit in their courses and who withdrew, failed, and/or received "no credit." Forty-seven percent of the total respondent group received credit for their coursework while 53 percent did not earn credit in all or most of the work attempted that first term. A comparison of the respondents who said that the coursework did and/or did not relate to their employment showed that 52 percent of the former but only 39 percent of the latter group earned credit that term.

Thus, it appears that students who enroll part-time for reasons other than occupational advancement are less likely to complete courses for credit than those who perceive that their coursework is related to their employment.

The former students were also asked whether they had enrolled elsewhere since the Fall 1972 term and, if so, at what institution(s), when, and for what purposes. The results of the analysis of one part of their responses are summarized in Table 12.

Forty-seven percent of the respondents listed at least one institution of postsecondary education in which they had enrolled after

TABLE 12

Types of Institutions Attended by Former Students
Since Leaving the Community Colleges
(N = 402)

Type of Institution	Percent Responding*
California Community College (in same or another district)	31%
California State University and Colleges	24
University of California:	
Full-time on campus	9
Extension or extended learning	4
California independent college or university	9
Out-of-state college or university	8
Community College adult education or community service program	4
High school adult education program	11
Private postsecondary institution for occupational education	9%

*The percentages sum to more than 100 since some respondents listed more than one institution.

leaving the Community College. Eight percent listed two or more such enrollments. The largest group enrolled in another Community College, usually in another district. In some instances, respondents had moved to another part of the State where they enrolled once again in a Community College. Others found it more convenient to enroll in a neighboring district, apparently without changing their residence. Still others simply transferred from one college in a district to another. Colleges in multi-campus districts have been requested to check the enrollment of all students in the sample to find out the volume of intra-district transfer. The results of the check are expected to increase significantly the percentage of students in the "lost" group who have transferred between colleges.

Twenty-four percent of the students enrolled at one of the State University and Colleges campuses after leaving the participating Community Colleges. There appear to be relatively few full-time transfer students in the respondent group. Instead, students enrolled part-time for one semester in order to satisfy some requirement or gain some skill which would help them in upper division and/or graduate work. Discussions with participating colleges have revealed that many are performing special services for students who are enrolled at other colleges by arranging for concurrent enrollments to satisfy particular course requirements. An analysis of the types of institutions which these students have attended (or are attending at present) shows great diversity in both objectives and levels of enrollment. Some are already enrolled in programs leading to advanced degrees while others were simply enrolling in Community College on their way to baccalaureate degrees in the State University system.

Locating Lost Students

All California Community Colleges were asked to check a random sample of 350 students to whom the follow-up letter could not be delivered (15 percent of this subgroup) to find out whether the students had been enrolled at another such institution during the study. Social Security numbers and dates of birth were provided, as well as names and colleges of origin.

Responses have been received from 46 Community Colleges to date, 18 of which are in the original sample of 32 colleges selected for the study. Positive matches have been made for 40 students (11 percent of the "lost" group) by 15 of the colleges which made the search. In each case the student was found to be enrolled at a college outside the district where he or she was first enrolled in the Fall 1972 term.

The Long-Time Persister

Reports from the participating colleges for the Fall 1975 term show that 14 percent of the student sample selected three years ago for the study was enrolled during the seventh semester, or fourth year. Ten percent of the group which enrolled this fall earned associate degrees or certificates during the study and were continuing their education at the same college. An additional 30 percent had been enrolled during each of the six prior semesters, many of whom qualified for associate degrees in terms of units of credit and quality of grades. The long-time persisting group also included about 200 students who had not been enrolled since the first term of the study (less than 1 percent of the total sample studied). The remaining 56 percent of the long-time persisters had been enrolled during at least two but fewer than all six previous semesters.

Amount of Credit Earned

The results of a tabulation of credit earned by the long-time persisters prior to the Fall 1975 term is shown in Table 13 with students grouped on the basis of their status at the end of the third year of the study. In some cases, the credit tabulated was less than the full amount earned. The problem occurred when the records available for analysis did not show prior credit earned by transfer students and/or credit earned during summer sessions. The reader is also cautioned that the analysis was limited to credit earned and does not include units attempted which did not result in credit.

Forty percent of the students enrolled during the fourth year of the study had accumulated less than the equivalent of a full year of credit during their prior enrollment. Thirty-eight percent appear to be within a few units of the amount of credit needed to qualify for an associate degree, although no analysis was made of the extent to which these students had completed general education and other course requirements. No more than one-fourth had earned more than 60 units of credit (equivalent to two years of college work), and about half of this group did not earn more credit than the maximum amount which can be transferred to the University of California and the State University and Colleges. The 30 percent of the long-time persisters who were enrolled for seven consecutive semesters is of considerable interest, in that two-thirds of this subgroup had earned less than 60 semester units before starting their fourth year.

A tabulation was also made of credit earned by students whose accumulated total exceeded 70 semester units. No distinction

TABLE 13

Prior Credit Earned by Students Enrolled During the Fourth Year of the Study, by Status at the End of the Third (In Percents)

Status at End of the Third Year	Semester Units of Credit Earned				Total	
	0-29	30-59	60-70	71+	N	%
Persisted at least two terms	42%	50%	7%	1%	1,199	25%
Still enrolled in sixth semester	11	55	18	16	1,438	30
Received degree or certificate	0	0	42	58	479	10
In and out pattern of enrollment	64	29	4	3	1,486	31
Enrolled only one term	96	4	0	0	192	4
Total	40%	38%	11%	11%	4,794	100%

was made between credit transferred from other institutions and that earned at the Community College. One-fourth of the group had earned at least 100 semester units of credit prior to the Fall 1975 term while 60 percent had earned between 71 and 90 units. An associate degree normally requires 60 semester units and a baccalaureate degree, at least 120 semester units. It is the policy of the public four-year institutions to accept as many as 70 semester units of transfer credit. The analysis of extra credit also showed that 16 percent had earned between 90 and 100 units of credit, or the equivalent of three years of college work.

Level of Prior Performance

The cumulative records of grades earned by students during the three years of the study were analyzed, exclusive of grades earned

at other institutions which were not available for analysis. Students were classified as having performed in either a "satisfactory" or "less than satisfactory" manner, on the basis of both grades earned and percentages of courses completed in which credit was earned. Students were put in the "less than satisfactory" category under the following conditions:

1. The college had placed them on probation following their last semester of enrollment;

2. Their cumulative and/or last semester grade-point average was below C; and/or

3. The student record showed a large percentage of withdrawals from courses, non-credit grades, and failing grades (for at least half the units attempted during one or more semesters).

Twenty percent of the students whose work was judged to be less than satisfactory had been placed on probation by their college. An additional 15 percent had earned grade-point averages below C but with no probation action shown on their permanent records. Finally, 65 percent, exclusive of the first two groups, showed a large percentage of withdrawals from courses and/or little credit earned in relation to units attempted.

Table 14 displays the results of the analysis for grouping of students based on their status at the end of the third year of the study.

More than two-thirds of the total group of long-time persisters were completing courses and performing at a satisfactory level. The group exhibiting the least satisfactory performance included the students who did not enroll in continuous attendance during the study. The performance of 58 percent of this group was judged to be less than satisfactory. This was also the largest group of persisters in the fourth year, comprising 31 percent of the total group. Their sporadic attendance does not appear to be the result of dismissal action by the colleges. Instead, students withdrew or discontinued their enrollment voluntarily after experiencing some difficulty--personal, academic, or other--in completing their courses. Such students were placed in the "less than satisfactory" group only after displaying a pattern of non-completion and/or poor performance during several terms.

Some students in each of the five groups at the end of the third year of the study performed at a level which was judged to be unsatisfactory. As might be expected, the lowest percentage was

found for students who had been awarded degrees and certificates. The "less than satisfactory" performance occurred after the awards had been made, when some students began to show a high incidence of withdrawal from the courses in which they enrolled as part of their continuing education.

TABLE 14

Academic Standing at the Beginning of the Seventh Semester (In Percents)

Status at End of the Third Year	N	Academic Standing	
		Satisfactory	Less than Satisfactory
Persisted at least two terms	1,187	68%	32%
Still enrolled in sixth semester	1,438	79%	21%
Received degree or certificate	479	95%	5%
In and out pattern of enrollment	1,486	58%	42%
Enrolled only one term	204	64%	36%
Total	4,794	69%	31%

Comments on Patterns of Enrollment

The great diversity in the characteristics of Community College students notwithstanding, students enrolled for credit in 1972 who comprised the sample for the longitudinal study appear to represent two subpopulations which differ significantly with respect to patterns of enrollment. One group was comprised predominantly of full-time students who enrolled for at least two consecutive semesters and who earned a large majority of the associate degrees awarded during the three years of the study. The other group included predominantly part-time students, enrolled in both day and evening programs. A majority of the students in the latter group enrolled only once during the

three-year period. Others enrolled on an intermittent basis and could not be counted on to return for a particular term; for example, every fall semester.

The two subpopulations are approximately equal in size at the present time, although those in continuous enrollment account for a considerably larger portion of the average daily attendance generated by the total sample. Unless enrollment trends change, the second intermittent enrollment group will become dominant in the Community Colleges in a few years and may bring about fundamental changes in the programs and practices of these institutions. Functions may remain unchanged, but greater emphasis will be placed on adult and continuing education for students with short-term, non-degree objectives.

From the findings we have concluded that continuous enrollment from semester to semester is not to be expected of most part-time students for whom jobs and family responsibilities have a higher priority, in terms of allocation of time, than enrollment in college. At the same time, the low rate of course completion--*i.e.*, persistence to the end of the semester--appears to be a problem meriting action by the colleges. All students were reported by their institutions to have been enrolled for credit in the fourth census week in the courses from which they subsequently withdrew without evaluation. One possible conclusion is that the present enrollment categories are not sufficiently flexible for older, part-time students who have no need for certification of satisfactory completion of courses, for either personal or career objectives.

At the other extreme, some students are enrolling for longer than the equivalent of two years beyond high school. These findings confirm the impressions held by Community Colleges that a significant portion of their students enroll for more than two years, often in noncontinuous attendance. There are several valid reasons why some students persist for more than two years, in addition to having attended on a part-time basis. First, some occupational curricula involve more than two years of college-level work although they are less than baccalaureate programs. Furthermore, some students wanting to enroll in occupational curricula have not completed necessary prerequisites, for example, mathematics and chemistry. Some transfer students also have high school deficiencies--in both subject and skills--which must be made up, for example, in English composition. Still, a third group of students enrolls in general education and other courses while waiting to gain admission to occupational curricula which cannot accommodate all students wanting to enroll in them, for example, some nursing programs and those in dental hygiene. Since these curricula involve sequences of courses which cannot be compressed into a single semester or year, students may be enrolled for four years before being able to complete the program of their choice.

Still, other students continue to enroll, semester after semester, simply because of their love of learning and nearly inexhaustible programs of courses offered by local Community Colleges. Many reside in communities where there is no four-year institution offering low-cost continuing education programs. These students, who are usually over 21 years of age and enrolled part time, are unconcerned that the courses are regarded as lower division offerings and may not be transferable to satisfy baccalaureate degree requirements. Some students are pursuing a second occupational curriculum after completing one earlier in the study. Others are enrolling in liberal arts courses after completing an occupational major, sometimes with the long-term goal of earning a baccalaureate degree at another institution. Others are embarking upon occupational curricula after completing transfer programs and finding an opportunity for neither transfer nor employment. The diversity of objectives and programs of the long-time persisters is as great as that of the first-time students in the Fall 1972 semester. It would be unwise to speculate about how much longer they will persist, or about how many additional degrees and certificates will be awarded to them.

Some students are continuing for two or more years without completing any significant portion of the courses in which they enroll. It appears that the colleges have not intervened successfully in helping such students find programs in which they can and will succeed, nor have students been required to stay out of school for a semester or a year following successive semesters in which little or no credit was earned. Sections 51303 and 51304 of Title 5 of the California Administrative Code require the Community Colleges to establish rules for probation and dismissal under conditions of "credit-no-credit" grading, as well as for letter grades. A review of current college catalogs has indicated that policies and rules are published there for both sets of conditions. In many cases, however, the rules do not apply to the part-time students whom the study has found to be less likely to complete courses than students enrolled on a full-time basis. Furthermore, the Code makes no reference to withdrawal from courses as a condition of probation and dismissal, although withdrawal and no credit appear to be somewhat interchangeable in the Community Colleges, with the latter awarded when a student has not withdrawn properly from a course.

The findings about persistence suggest that the present system of enrolling and evaluating students in semester- or quarter-long credit courses is too inflexible to accommodate the increasing numbers of students in adult and continuing education, if persistence in courses is a primary measure by which the system is to be judged and funded. Use of a second census date and positive attendance accounting in all classes are simply mechanisms for funding which do not get at the educational issues.

The first of these is whether students in credit courses should be expected to demonstrate their achievement of course objectives at whatever time they want to leave the course--before the end of the term, at the usual examination period, or after an extension into the next term in cases where the student has not been able to complete the work at the desired level.

The second issue involves the enrollment of non-credit students in credit courses. The Community Colleges are now serving increasing numbers of local residents who already hold college degrees and have no need for course credit or grades, as well as older citizens who enroll for personal development objectives for which course credit is irrelevant. The enrollment of such students on a non-credit basis appears to be highly preferable to offering a parallel program of non-credit "classes for adults" for a number of reasons. Foremost is the increased expense which parallel credit and non-credit programs would entail. From an educational point of view, the older, non-credit students make a positive contribution to the course activity by virtue of their maturity and experience which both fellow students and instructors value.*

Grades and Grading

Rationale for the Analysis

Letter grades and units of credit are the academic currency of higher education. Community Colleges are well aware of the limitations of such symbols, particularly for nontraditional students who have acquired knowledge and skills outside the classroom, and for students whose educational objectives may not require certification of satisfactory completion of courses and programs by the colleges. Still, course grades and credits are used almost universally to decide whether students may pursue certain programs of study, continue in and advance through curricula, transfer to other institutions, and be awarded degrees and certificates. Furthermore, funding for Community College operations is highly dependent on student enrollments in courses that meet a certain number of hours per week for a given amount of credit. Finally,

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* Attention is called to legislation passed in the 1975 session of the State Legislature which grants special enrollment privileges to senior citizens wanting to attend classes on two State University and Colleges campuses.

the nature of possible alternatives to course grades and credits is not yet clear to students, faculty, and those responsible for setting policies for postsecondary education.

Community Colleges are not at all complacent users of traditional grades and credits, because of the diversity of both their programs and the objectives of their students. All students in the samples in the study were enrolled for credit, although students in some colleges had the option of enrolling in the same courses on a non-credit basis in the Fall 1972 term. Still, another option was available to students in credit courses, namely, to withdraw from a course or courses without penalty whenever the student's objectives were achieved. College practices varied widely with respect to the published dates by which students should have withdrawn to avoid possible penalty grades. However, very few penalty grades (WF) were awarded by the colleges studied for late withdrawal from courses.

The analysis of grades and grade-point averages was undertaken on the assumption that course grades and credits earned, and non-penalty grades received are worthy of treatment as traditional indicators of performance in college, in spite of the limitations which have been discussed and in the absence of better indicators at the present time. The assumption is also made that these measures do not represent performance adequately.

Findings About Grades and Grade-Point Averages

The grades and grade-point averages earned by various subsamples of students during their first term of enrollment in the Community Colleges have been analyzed in considerable detail. Little attention has been paid to grade-point averages earned after the first semester for several reasons. First, the large majority of the students who enrolled for at least two consecutive semesters usually performed at a high level. The performance of the minority which did not earn satisfactory grades will be treated in a later section of the report. Second, some colleges did not report cumulative grade-point averages, including some which could not compute them during parts of the study because of problems with their computers. The incidence of W (for withdrawal without penalty), CR (for credit without grade points), and NCR (for no credit and no penalty) also tended to make grade-point averages poor indicators of performance on the part of students who earned few letter grades.

Table 15 displays the major subgroups for whom the analysis of first-term grades was performed. The 18 percent of students who

withdrew during the term without receiving grades was omitted from such analyses. However, an additional five percent who completed the term but earned no credit for the work attempted was included in all analyses of grades on the grounds that the students were officially enrolled for the entire term and were subject to whatever policies were in force relative to academic probation and

TABLE 15

Rates of First-Year Non-Persistence for First-Time Freshmen and Transfer Students, by Part-Time and Full-Time Status*
(In Percents)

Type of Non-Persistence	Admissions Status	Enrollment Status**			
		Part-Time	Full-Time	Total	
				N	%
Withdrew within fall term	Freshman	24%	7%	4,056	17%
	Transfer	24	11	2,181	21
	Total	24	8	6,237	18
Discontinued after fall term	Freshman	25	12	4,772	20
	Transfer	31	17	2,907	28
	Total	27	13	7,679	22
Total	Freshman	49	19	8,828	37
	Transfer	55	28	5,088	49
	Total	51	21		40
	Total N	11,202	2,714	13,916	--

* An additional 8 percent of the sample withdrew during the spring term. However, 21 percent of the students who withdrew in the fall returned in the spring, one-third of whom withdrew a second time.

** Part-time is defined as less than 12 units, full-time as 12 units or more.

dismissal. Thus, the major comparisons of grades earned which were made involve:

1. The 60 percent who enrolled in the second semester (63 percent of the freshmen and 51 percent of the transfers) and the 22 percent who completed the term but discontinued their enrollment;

2. The 49 percent of the part-time students who enrolled in the second semester (51 percent of the freshmen and 45 percent of the transfers) and the 27 percent who discontinued their enrollment after completing the first term; and

3. The 79 percent of the full-time students who enrolled in the second semester (81 percent of the freshmen and 72 percent of the transfers) and the 13 percent who discontinued their enrollment after completing the term.

Percentages of passing grades (A, B, C, D, and CR), withdrawal from courses, and failing grades (F, NCR, and WF) are shown in Table 16 for students who completed the first semester. Excluding the group which withdrew from all classes during the semester, the analysis shows that 76 percent of the more than 95,000 course grades used in the analysis produced credit, only 10 percent were unsatisfactory, and 14 percent were withdrawals without penalty. Freshmen and transfer students--persisters and nonpersisters combined--performed at about the same level, with only 4 percent more passing and 3 percent less failing grades received by the transfers. However, students who continued beyond the first semester and those who did not differed significantly with respect to the percentages of passing, failing, and withdrawal of grades received. Eighty-two percent of the continuing students earned grades which produced credit, compared with only 53 percent of those who discontinued. Only 7 percent of the grades earned by continuing students were failing or "no credit," compared with 23 percent of those earned by nonpersisters. The percentages of withdrawal grades also differed for the two groups (11 and 24 percent, respectively).

First-term, grade-point averages earned by various subgroups of students are shown in Table 17. Those who earned no grades were excluded from the analysis. The mean averages (the average of the grade-point averages) are all above C. In all comparisons, however, the continuing students earned higher mean grade-point averages than did those who terminated their enrollment. The largest differences were found for the comparison groups of freshmen (students with no prior college experience) and full-time

TABLE 16

Percentages of Course Grades Which Were Passing, Withdrawals, and Other*

Type of Student		Type of Grade		
		Pass	Withdraw	Other
Freshman		75%	14%	11%
Transfer		79	13	8
Persister		82	11	7
Non-Persister		53	24	23
Total	N	72,955	13,439	9,599
	%	76%	14%	10%

* Students who withdrew from all classes during the term are not included in the distribution. "Other" includes F, WF, NCR, and other indicators which do not result in credit granted.

TABLE 17

First-Term Grade-Point Averages Earned by Various Groups of Students Who Completed at Least One Term

Type of Student	Status at End of Term	Size of Group[1]		Grade-Point Average[3]
		N	%	
Freshman	Continued	15,185	63%	2.73
	Discontinued	4,772	20	2.08
Transfer	Continued	5,362	51	3.03
	Discontinued	2,907	28	2.65
Part-Time[2]	Continued	10,550	49	2.73
	Discontinued	5,955	27	2.33
Full-Time[2]	Continued	9,997	79	2.75
	Discontinued	1,724	13	2.09
Total	Continued	20,547	60	2.73
	Discontinued	7,679	22%	2.31

1. Remainder of the group withdrew during the term without grades.

2. Part-time students were enrolled for fewer than twelve units, full-time for twelve or more units at the fall census week.

3. A = 4.00, B = 3.00, C = 2.00.

students. In each comparison, students who discontinued after one semester earned a mean average only slightly above C (2.08 and 2.09, respectively), while the continuing students earned a mean average of C+ (2.73 and 2.75, respectively). Continuing students in the transfer and part-time subgroups also earned higher mean grade-point averages than did those who stopped.

Distribution of the nearly 96,000 course grades awarded to students completing the first semester are displayed in Table 18 for various subgroups. It is quite obvious that the distribution of grades is skewed. Forty-four percent of the grades awarded were A or B, only 5 percent were D, and 3 percent were grades of F. Credit grades which do not carry grade points (CR) accounted for 5 percent of those awarded, while another 5 percent were non-credit grades which have no effect on the grade-point average (NCR). The major difference between the distributions of grades for freshmen and transfer students is in the percentages of A's awarded (18 percent for the freshmen and 28 percent for the transfers). However, differences between students who continued and discontinued may be seen throughout the distributions of grades. Seventy-two percent of the continuing students' grades were A, B, or C, with another 10 percent passing (D or CR); only 46 percent of the non-continuing students' grades were A, B, or C, with another 7 percent passing. Thus, only 53 percent of the grades earned by students who completed but did not continue beyond the first semester produced credit, compared with 82 percent of the grades received by students who attended at least the first two semesters.

Finally, the results of an additional analysis of the grade-point averages earned by subgroups of one-time enrollees are shown in Table 19. More than half of the students in each subgroup and 68 percent of the total group had earned grade-point averages of C or better during their one term of enrollment, but 24 percent of the total group was in academic difficulty when they discontinued with grade-point averages below D. Courses for which they received NCR grades were not counted and would have lowered the averages if they had been included as F grades in the computation. The table shows quite clearly that students with no prior college who are discontinuing after one semester are performing at a much lower level than transfer students (2.08 and 2.65, respectively), although some transfers were admitted with unsatisfactory grades earned at four-year institutions. Furthermore, the mean grade-point average for full-time freshmen who discontinued after one semester was below C (1.98), with 28 percent of the group having earned averages below D. Community College students are not dismissed for poor scholarship after only one semester. Thus, the decision to discontinue at that point was a voluntary one on the part of the student.

TABLE 18

Distribution of First-Term Course Grades
for Freshmen and Transfer Students,
Persisters and Nonpersisters,
and Total First-Time Students

Course Grades*	Type of Student					
	Freshman	Transfer	Persister	Non-Persister	Total	
					N	%
A	18%	28%	22%	14%	19,199	20%
B	24	27	26	17	23,038	24
C	23	18	24	15	21,118	22
D	5	3	5	4	4,792	5
F	3	2	2	8	2,880	3
W	14	13	11	24	13,439	14
WF	<1	<1	<1	<1	25	<1
INC	1	1	1	2	957	1
CR	5	3	5	3	4,808	5
NCR	5	4	3	11	4,786	5
Other	1	1	<1	1	951	1
N	74,390	21,603	77,227	18,766	95,993	--
%	77%	23%	80%	20%	--	100%

* W = withdrawal from course without penalty.
WF = withdrawal while failing or for excessive absence.
INC = incompleted course.
CR/NCR = credit or no credit awarded, no effect on grade-point average.
Other = local indicators with no general significance.

The grades of W which were awarded students who withdrew from all classes during the term are not included in the distribution. This group amounted to 18 percent of the sample (6,237 students in 15,578 courses). The inclusion of such grades would increase the overall percentage of W grades significantly, with a concomitant reduction in letter grades.

TABLE 19

Distribution of Grade-Point Averages Earned by Students Who Discontinued After One Term, by Enrollment and Admissions Status*

Grade-Point Average	Part-Time		Full-Time		Total			
	Freshman	Transfer	Freshman	Transfer	Freshman	Transfer	Total N	Total %
3.0 - 4.0	37%	59%	21%	46%	34%	58%	3,302	43%
2.5 - 2.9	4	3	15	15	7	5	461	6
2.0 - 2.4	20	16	23	15	21	16	1,459	19
1.5 - 1.9	2	<1	7	5	3	1	230	3
1.0 - 1.4	7	3	6	3	6	3	384	5
Below 1.0	30%	18%	28%	16%	29%	17%	1,843	24%
Mean	2.12	2.66	1.98	2.55	2.08	2.65	--	2.31

* No grades are awarded to students who withdraw during the term.

The incidence of part-time freshmen with grade-point averages below D (30 percent) appears to be in part the result of improper withdrawal from one course or action by an instructor for non-completion of course which resulted in a grade of F.

Comments on Grades and Grading

Like other educational institutions, the Community Colleges have experienced fundamental changes in grading policies and practices during the past five years. The changes have arisen out of two somewhat independent sets of conditions. The first represents a change in the basic philosophy of grading which began when large numbers of veterans returned to college and found that the poor academic records they had made before entering service would not be expunged. The notion of forgiveness for past mistakes in college performances spread to other types of students, particularly in Community Colleges where it is not at all unusual for students to make poor initial choices of courses and curriculums, in terms of both ability and career interests. In fact, such forgiveness has traditionally distinguished the California Community Colleges from other higher education institutions.

More recently, the idea of expunging student records of mistakes made sometime in the past has led to the practice of not awarding punitive grades (F and WF) at all, on the grounds that the student record should show only the coursework in which he or she has demonstrated satisfactory achievement. Variations on this theme of posting only passing grades on the record include:

1. Extension of the period of time during which a student may withdraw from a course without penalty (W), sometimes including the final examination period when the student may request that a W be substituted for an earned grade;

2. Use of Credit/No Credit (C/NC) in place of letter grades, with no penalty incurred for the receipt of NCR since it is excluded from the computation of the grade-point average; and

3. Increased enrollment of nontraditional students in continuing education who have no need for certification of course completion in terms of course credits and grades.

While interest was mounting in having student records reflect only achievements, still other pressures were being exerted to produce what has become known as grade inflation, that is, raising all passing grades to A and B. The pressure came with the

phenomenon of compulsory education through high school and increased expectation of participation at least through the Community Colleges. At the same time, vastly increased competition for admission to graduate and professional schools also produced pressure on college and university faculties to award high grades at the upper division level. The latter pressure has had a kind of suction effect which extends all the way down through elementary and high schools.

Community Colleges have simply been caught up in the nationwide movement to change grading structures and practices so as to remove punitive aspects of grading. Changes were less necessary in these institutions than elsewhere because of the Community College mission to provide multiple opportunities to students who may need to explore several curricula before finding one appropriate to their interests and abilities. Unsatisfactory grades have usually been ignored in determining eligibility for Community College degrees and certificates if courses in which they were earned are not needed for degree requirements, and other courses have been taken and passed in place of those which produced poor grades. Furthermore, Community College students have been able to transfer to four-year institutions with an overall grade-point average of C. Once transferred, Community College grades are ignored in computing grade-point averages for the baccalaureate degree and for admission to graduate school.

Thus, grades and grade-point averages, which have been regarded as inadequate indices of student achievement have now become suspect in that they reflect neither the level of performance reached by a particular student nor differences among students in performance in the same course or class. The problem is more serious for Community Colleges than for other types of postsecondary institutions, insofar as there are still large numbers of students who need certification of performance. The greater homogeneity of grades which are now awarded is somewhat incompatible with the wide diversity of objectives, talents, and prior educational achievements of the new student clienteles in the Community Colleges. There are at least two issues relative to grading which need to be faced:

1. To what extent are transcripts of Community Colleges student records used outside the institution, except in transferring between institutions?

2. Can grades and traditional transcripts be replaced by other measures which will be useful both in describing individual students and in evaluating programs and institutions?

In spite of widespread reservations, grades continue to be used as the major currency in education. While grades have become inflated and thus more homogenous during the past several years, problems of interpretation have also arisen out of the use of substitutes for letter grades. This became evident in the analysis of transcripts and grade reports for students enrolled at different colleges in the study. The major area in which there is little agreement is the use of NCR, F, and W to signify noncompletion of courses.

NCR may mean enrollment in the course on a non-credit basis, failure to achieve at an acceptable standard, or noncompletion of the course. W is also used to signify both failure to achieve at a level which produces a credit grade and withdrawal from the course without penalty. Relatively few F grades were found in the student records. When found, they appear to have been given for any of several reasons--improper withdrawal from the course, absence at the time of the final examination, and unsatisfactory performance. From past studies of grades awarded, it appears that non-penalty grades of W and NCR have been substituted for grades of D during the period of the study. The practice results in a loss of credit which, when balanced by grades of A and B in other courses, could be used to satisfy degree and transfer requirements.

The analysis of student records has also suggested the existence of a problem with respect to grading practices which limit a student's opportunity to continue in good standing, transfer to a baccalaureate institution, and in some cases enroll in a specialized program. Two students who demonstrate the same level of achievement in the same program of courses at two institutions may have permanent records which would show one to be on academic probation as a result of failure to earn credit in at least half the units attempted, and the other to have a grade-point average of B+ for the two courses in which he earned passing grades out of five attempted. Autonomy was given to the Community College boards of trustees to develop local grading practices under minimum guidelines established in Title 5 of the Administrative Code. It appears that variances in current practice may be excessive insofar as opportunities for postsecondary education are variable for students enrolled in colleges with different grading practices.

APPENDIX A

California Community Colleges Participating in the Study, Together with Sizes of Samples and Campus Coordinators

The following persons worked with project staff at the Coordinating Council in providing student data needed in the study, in addition to college coordinators on the list which follows: Los Rios Community College District, Leo Day; State Center Community College District, Howard Kane; Los Angeles Community College District, Arthur Cherdack; Peralta Community College District, Scott Baldwin; San Diego Community College District, Kenneth Magers; and City College of San Francisco, E. Lance Rogers.

APPENDIX A

California Community Colleges Participating in the Study, Together with Sizes of Samples and Campus Coordinators

Community College	Size of Sample			Campus Coordinator
	Total Freshmen	Total Transfer	Sample Total	
American River	1,559	608	2,167	Lorine Aughinbaugh
Bakersfield	835	182	1,017	Lanning L. Flint
Butte	311	169	480	Romeo Morin
Cabrillo	245	180	425	Joseph Cianciarulo
Diablo Valley	1,054	398	1,452	William Preston
El Camino	1,408	581	1,989	Jerry Garlock
Fresno City	856	330	1,186	Merle M. Martin
Glendale	458	81	539	John Davitt
Golden West	774	466	1,240	Donald L. Randol
Grossmont	860	423	1,283	Edward Krehbiel
Laney	490	461	951	Peter Selo
Los Angeles City	1,336	164	1,500	Ben Gold
Los Angeles Trade-Tech.	984	493	1,477	Charles Davis
Marin	419	199	618	Irwin P. Diamond
Merritt	379	336	715	Wilfred Desrosiers, Jr.
Monterey Peninsula	693	303	996	Jack Bessire
Moorpark	380	239	619	James Moore

Community College	Size of Sample			Campus Coordinator
	Total Freshmen	Total Transfer	Sample Total	
Mt. San Antonio	1,203	315	1,518	Max Bell
Mt. San Jacinto	305	132	437	Mildred Hight
Napa	309	182	491	Joseph Tidgewell
Pasadena City	1,055	474	1,529	Bruce Conklin
Porterville	316	79	395	Paul R. Kercher
Sacramento City	1,135	559	1,694	Elbert L. Kinnebrew
San Bernardino Valley	964	375	1,339	S. V. Patrick
San Diego City	729	429	1,158	Kenneth E. Magers
City College of San Francisco	1,574	596	2,170	James L. Billwiller
Santa Ana	625	472	1,097	Thomas Wright
Santa Barbara City	326	290	616	Al Silvera
Shasta	468	107	575	Walter Brooks
Southwestern	559	289	848	Allan MacDougall
Taft	229	15	244	Dorothy E. Parrott
West Valley	1,023	457	1,480	Warren W. Sorenson
Total	23,861	10,384	34,245	

APPENDIX B

Definitions of Terms

Reference: Handbook of Definitions, Sacramento: Chancellor's Office, California Community Colleges.

1. Definitions Relating to Students

   a. Total Enrollment

      All students enrolled in credit and non-credit classes during the fourth week of regularly scheduled classes during the semester or quarter.

   b. Freshman

      A student who, at the time of registration, has completed fewer than 30 semester units of credit and who is registered in at least one credit course.

   c. Sophomore

      A student who, at the time of registration, has completed:

      1) At least 30 but fewer than 60 semester units of credit; or

      2) Sixty or more semester units of credit but does not hold a degree, and who is registered in at least one credit course.

   d. First-Time Freshman[1]

      A student enrolled in a regular session of any college for the first time

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1. The definition differs from the one appearing in the *Handbook of Data and Definitions in Higher Education* of the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers and from the one used by the U.S. Office of Education. The difference arises from the exclusion of attendance in summer session as a consideration in determining the admission classification of a student enrolled in a regular session. With the application of the above definitions, a student's classification should be determined without reference to summer session, as differentiated from summer quarter, attendance.

e. First-Time Transfer

A student enrolled in a regular session in the reporting college for the first time and who transferred from another institution of higher education.

f. Returning Transfer

A student who attended the reporting college, transferred to another college, and has now returned to the reporting college.

g. Other Returning

A student enrolled in a regular session after an absence of one or more regular sessions without interim attendance at another college.

h. Continuing

A student who is enrolled in the current semester or quarter and who was enrolled in the immediately prior semester or quarter. (Excludes summer session.)

i. Defined Adult

Any person who has attained his/her 21st birthday on or before September 1 or February 1 of the semester for which he is enrolled in fewer than 10 class hours as of the census date.

2. Definitions Relating to Classes

a. Credit Class (graded)

Courses (classes) meeting the course criteria and standards which the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges has promulgated in Title V of the *Administrative Code*.

1) Criteria. A graded (credit) class shall possess one or more of the following characteristics:

a) Provides credit toward an associate degree.

b) Is normally considered of college level and is approved by the board as part of a course of study leading toward an associate degree.

c) Is part of an occupational course of study beyond high school level leading to an associate degree or occupational certificate or both.

d) Is recognized by the University of California, a California State University or College, or accredited independent college or university in California as part of:

(1) Required preparation toward a major; or

(2) General or general education requirement; or

(3) Permissible or recommended elective credits.

2) Standards. A graded (credit) class shall meet all of the following standards:

a) Content meets requirements for associate degree or certificate and is part of a course of study not over 70 units in length.

b) Offered as described in the college catalog which provides an appropriate title, number and description of course content. A course outline is available in the college.

c) Is subject to the published standards of matriculation, attendance and achievement of the college.

d) Only students who meet prerequisites for the course are enrolled.

e) Is awarded marks or g ades.

f) Enrollment cannot be repeated without prior written approval of the college authorities.

b. Non-Credit Class (Classes for Adults) (Ungraded Class)

Such classes in order to be eligible for State apportionment must be approved by the Chancellor's Office. These classes are without college grade-level designation and are organized primarily for persons 21 years of age or over. These courses have been designed primarily to meet the special needs and capabilities of adult students and determined to be an adult class by the governing board of the district. Such courses are conducted in accordance with a course outline but need not be a part of an organized sequence of classes.

A college district governing board, by its prior authorization, may grant credit toward an associate degree or toward a certificate to individual students who have completed courses established as classes for adults provided that the class also meets the criteria and standards for graded classes.

c. Day Class

Such classes are generally defined as classes beginning before 4:30 p.m.

d. Evening Class

Such classes are generally defined as classes beginning at 4:30 p.m. or later.

3. First Census Week

The fourth week of regularly scheduled classes in a semester or quarter.

APPENDIX C

CALIFORNIA'S COMMUNITY COLLEGES: PROMISES TO KEEP

Glenn G. Gooder
Superintendent/President
Santa Barbara City College

Judgments about whether or not California's Community Colleges are fulfilling their purposes and achieving their objectives should be made in terms of present and future human needs and in terms of purposes and people served. No longer can we insist that the people adapt to their institutions. We must insist that their institutions adapt to the people. The community college is the best existing example of a public institution designed to adapt to people. More than any other segment of education, it reflects societal trends because it is designed to adapt to those trends.

The purposes and objectives of California's Community Colleges may be described best as four promises to the people. When those promises have been kept, the community college system will be fulfilling its purposes and achieving its objectives.

The people expect the community colleges to be comprehensive. A comprehensive college gives equal dignity to all kinds of learning -- academic, occupational, practical, and liberal. The standard of excellence is based upon individual achievement and not upon the inherent value of any subject matter.

The people expect the community colleges to maintain an open door. In an open-door college, students are welcomed for what they are and for what they may become rather than for what they have been. The unprepared, the neglected, the disadvantaged, and the unmotivated are considered the most challenging students as the physician considers his most difficult cases the greatest challenge to his professional skill.

The people expect the community colleges to emphasize teaching. In a teaching college, students not subject matter are the primary concern. In

such a college, teachers understand the impact of self-fulfilling prophecies. They see as their professional responsibility the need to find means, methods, and materials to enable the largest proportion of their students to master the subject matter before them.

The people expect the community colleges to be the college of the community. In the college of the community, each citizen is welcome to participate according to his or her needs. The college is extended throughout the community to enhance the human condition and the quality of life for citizens as well as for students.

Perhaps it would be convenient if it were still relatively easy to describe a college student. Inconvenient as it may be to educators and to policymakes, however, the traditional stereotype of a college student is no longer accurate or useful. People and purposes different from the traditional must be served in the last quarter of this century. Needs and, therefore, students change from year to year. Significant changes have occurred since 1972 when S.B. 772 called for a study of"...the extent to which the California Community College System is fulfilling its purposes and achieving its objectives".

College degrees have less currency than they had in 1972. The draft and the extremely unpopular Vietnam war have ended. The national and international economic situation has deteriorated. Unemployment has increased sharply. Public policy has encouraged outreach programs to serve previously neglected populations including minorities, women, the physically handicapped, and veterans. Part-time college attendance has become essential for many people and convenient for many more.

The study prompted by S.B. 772 is bound to provide useful information. It may be expected to describe a student population that does not meet traditional stereotypes. Hopefully, it will serve as a basis for adapting post-secondary education to current and future needs of people rather than as a rationale for insisting that new kinds of students with new kinds of needs adapt to traditional perceptions of post-secondary education.

January 1976

APPENDIX D

THE ASSOCIATE DEGREE -- FOR WHAT? FOR WHOM? WHY?

Under minimum State regulations, each local Community College governing board develops and adopts, with the advice and consultation of their faculties, Associate degree programs--one in Arts and the other in Science. The requirements reflect a balance of general education, major requirements, and electives. Residence requirements are a necessity, as is a "C" average in the required 60 semester units. Recipients of these degrees have not only met State requirements, but they have also--and this is most important--met the additional requirements of their local board and faculty.

Yet, for many students, these particular requirements do not meet their needs. The student transferring to a four-year institution places first priority on meeting the lower division requirements of that particular institution, which usually differ from the associate degree requirements. On the other hand, many students seek and earn Certificates of Achievement, Certificates of Proficiency, or Certificates of Completion, which designate different levels of proficiency in occupationally oriented programs requiring less than 60 semester units.

High school juniors and seniors enroll in the advanced placement programs for enrichment or to accelerate their movement toward transfer to a four-year institution, or to prepare for employment. A large number of more mature students--knowing their own needs--enroll in courses that assist them to survive in a rapidly changing world. For the majority of these students, the associate degree is not the goal.

Associate degree candidates attend the same classes as other students. Each group utilizes the curriculum and services of the Community College for his or her immediate or long-term needs. Many enroll intermittently over an extended period of time, dropping in or dropping out as their own personal needs and commitments dictate. In brief, the associate degree reflects a certified level of achievement that is important to some. It may signify to others a level of achievement never before attained within the family structure, and for others it may meet the minimal job certification required by many private and governmental employers. One needs only to attend a Community College commencement to realize the pride and sense of achievement evidenced by the graduates and their families as the degrees are conferred. Yet, anyone who knows the Community College knows that it is marked by its diversity. The range of student ages, aims, and abilities must be matched by a range of goals and opportunities. The associate

degree provides a goal and an opportunity for some Community College students. To eliminate it would be to rob the Community College of constructive form; to demand it of all would be to cheapen the degree and pervert the institution that grants it.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
LOS ANGELES

MAR 26 1976

CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES

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